Canada's Gay Community Magazine

OUTLOOKS

December 2006

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December in OUTLOOKS

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From the first moment when you arrive in Minneapolis you will instantly understand why Mary Richards tossed her hat into the air for seven years on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, set in this vibrant locale.

The British seem to always be a step ahead of North Americans when it comes to provocative and edgy television. After all, this is the land that brought us the original *Queer as Folk* and *Little Britain*, and audiences have never looked back...

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Photo by: Denise Grant

With the holiday festivities fast approaching, it's time to finalize those seasonal entertainment plans. So whether you're headed home to Toronto to spend time with family and friends, or whether you have simply chosen our great city as your holiday vacation destination, enjoy!

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Looking Towards 2007

By John Coulbourn

As 2006 careers towards an ending, trying to predict gay issues over the next year is enough to make predicting the weather in these days of global warming seem like a cakewalk.

One can take hope, of course, in the news that South Africa has joined the coalition of the thrilling by legalizing marriage between same sex partners, while, south of the border, the always more socially informed Democrats have reclaimed a majority in both houses from the hide-bound Republicans.

But before you crack out the South African champagne to celebrate international liberation, let's not lose sight of the fact that the mere notion of a Gay Pride Parade in Jerusalem was enough to spawn rioting in the streets, as hard-line members of the Jewish faith fought to impose their narrow vision of right and wrong on an entire nation.

And, while hard-line Republicans got spanked by an annoyed American electorate, that same electorate voted to support the traditional definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman in several state-sponsored initiatives.

So, while it appears that the gay boogie that will carry us into 2007 may just be an updated version of the hesitation waltz—you know, two steps forward, two steps back—here's a few predictions for the rest of this year and what the coming year holds in store for all of Dorothy's little friends.

1. "Canada's New Government," under the increasingly tight choke hold of Stephen Harper will finally table a motion asking Members of Parliament whether or not they want to re-open debate on the contentious issue of same-sex marriage.

Or maybe they won't.

Seems that, on this question, Harper is as big a ditherer as he accused Paul Martin of being, which is rather bizarre, when one considers that this was the first promise Harper made when he hit the campaign trail before the last election.

Once earmarked for this fall's legislative agenda, the same sex marriage issue seems to have disappeared from the Conservative radar while they fight to overcome all the negative publicity from an environmental program that appears to have been written in crayon and a foreign and military policy that appears to have been forged in Washington.

Rest assured, however, that there has been no global warming amongst Conservative stalwarts when it comes to this issue. While some may see foot-dragging as a way to cement the right wing vote in another election (which, pray God, will not be far off), others recognise the fact that every time the issue resurfaces, a few more reasonable people in Canada take a close look at the Conservatives and see the face of bigotry instead.

2. At least once a month, somewhere in the Western World, another high profile spokesperson for the radical religious right will be caught, at least figuratively speaking, on his knees with his Fruit-of-the-Looms at half mast and another man at attention—and he won't be praying for forgiveness.

Those prayers will come later, leading cynics in our midst to question whether "the sinner" is indeed sorry for his actions or simply sorry he got caught.

Fundamentalists the world over will continue to ignore the fact that these people are fighting against nature.

And certain religious zealots will continue to insist that homosexuality can be "cured" by prayer. They will resolutely ignore the effect those prayers might have had on the wayward—um, er, well—eyes of career of politicos like Mark Foley and evangelists like Ted Haggard this year.

All things considered, however, it seems that prayer is just about as effective at staving off homosexuality as garlic is at keeping Vampires at bay—or abstinence at preventing HIV infection.

3. Some few of those caught red-handed (for lack of a better expression) will confess, usually in a rain of tearful recrimination, that despite years of preaching intolerance for gays and lesbians, they are in fact, gay or lesbian.

And gays and lesbians the world over will wonder whether it isn't past time we had a few entrance requirements to keep the riffraff at bay.

4. As the new James Bond, Daniel Craig will lead more than a few straight men to question their commitment to their heterosexuality—and perhaps discover that prayer is not the answer.

5. Many of us in the GBLT community will look back on the Christmas of 2006 as one of the best we've ever had—a Yuletide season in which we were surrounded by the love of our own families and the affection of good friends, old and new. Or at least, that's my very fondest hope.

Merry Christmas everyone—and seeing as how we can't avoid it, here's to an interesting 2007. ▼

John Coulbourn is a native Albertan who lived for many years in Calgary. He now makes his home in Toronto, where he covers performing arts for the Toronto Sun.

IN THE NEWS
OutFest Searching For Volunteers

Start the New Year with a contribution to Calgary's GLBT community and the opportunity to help stage a major event taking place in 2007. There are many ways to help make a difference and contribute your time to a worthwhile venture.

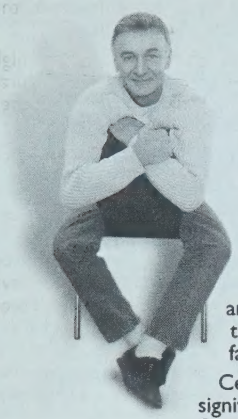
OutFest 2007, which is a part of the North American OutGames to be held in Calgary between April 1st to 8th, 2007, has an immediate need for volunteers to staff a number of committees and to assist in the performance and exhibition of various arts and cultural events.

Volunteer opportunities exist in the areas of promotion, marketing, and coordinating theatre, comedy, vocal, and film performances as well as visual art exhibitions. This is a great way to show support of your community, meet new friends and make a valuable contribution to a special event.

OutFest 2007 is one of the three parts of the North American OutGames, the other two being the OutRights human rights conference, and the OutGames sporting events. Several thousand participants and visitors are expected to attend and participate in the Calgary event. The North American OutGames will without doubt be the largest GLBT event to occur in Calgary and Alberta. It is expected that OutFest will feature approximately twenty-five live performances and have several visual art exhibitions located at the Epcor Centre in downtown Calgary.

With just a few months before the Festival begins, the organization is gearing up for a great Festival and now is the time to get involved and step forward to offer your assistance.

To be part of OutFest and volunteer please contact garycourtney@shaw.ca
For further information see **calgary2007.com**. ▼



Year's End Approaches

By Roy Heale

As the pages diminish on the December calendar and a New Year looms ahead of us, it seems inevitable to reflect upon another year that seems to have passed far too quickly.

Certainly for Canada's GLBT community, the most significant highlight of 2006 must surely be the First World OutGames in Montreal this past summer. Reputed to be an unqualified success, the worldwide gay community converged on this city by the thousands. They were treated to fierce, yet friendly, sports competitions, first class Opening and Closing Ceremonies, parties, festivals and a human rights conference. Without a doubt, Montreal has set a new standard for GLBT gatherings and future OutGames will have to work hard to live up to this great reputation earned whilst being the first to venture into this major undertaking.

Here at *Outlooks* we have entered our tenth year of publishing and our tenth annual Reader Survey has now been completed and tabulated. While much has changed in Canada's GLBT community during these ten years, our loyal readership has remained consistent with only some demographics changing slightly. So what makes an *Outlooks* reader distinctive?

Our reader's primary age range is still about fifty percent between ages twenty-six to forty-five with an average income in excess of forty thousand dollars per year. Over forty per cent are homeowners with new condominiums being the most popular choice of residence. Significantly, just over seventy percent are openly gay, which is one statistic that has grown dramatically since our first survey back in 1997. The overall lesbian readership has grown by fifty percent and each copy of *Outlooks* is read by an average of just over three people. The most-read favourite columns and features are Out and About, Travel, In The News, Humour and Issue related editorials.

We would like to thank the hundreds of readers who took the time to complete the survey and provide us with invaluable feedback. To those who suggested changes or improvements we will do our best to incorporate these ideas into our 2007 editorial plans. The winner of the vilain garcon T-shirt and one hundred dollars cash is Mychol Scully of Toronto.

During this past summer, the Outlooks Millennium Community Foundation received notice from the MBNA Bank of Canada that they would not be renewing the MasterCard credit card affinity program contract, which expired this year. As this was the primary source of income for the Foundation, the Board of Directors decided to wind down the Foundation's operations. It was never the intention of the Foundation to compete with other GLBT groups by holding fund-raising events that might hinder or harm long-established fund raising activities in the community. Therefore the source of income for the Foundation was diminished.

The Board of Directors decided to donate the remaining funds on hand to EGALE representing our national interests and to The Sharpe Foundation for AIDS hospice support, in accordance with the Foundation's original mandate. We hope that these donations (totaling almost nine thousand dollars) at this time of the year will prove to be welcome gifts to both organisations.

To everyone who used the affinity card for their consumer spending we express our gratitude for your support, which resulted in the many thousands of dollars raised and donated to GLBT community groups during the past six years. It should be noted that MBNA Bank of Canada gave no reason for the termination and non-renewal of this affinity program agreement.

As the clock ticks and we begin the countdown to another New Year, the Holiday Season will soon be upon us with all the joys, parties and requisite shopping for gifts that are an annual tradition to close out the old year. However you spend your holidays with family or friends, everyone at *Outlooks* wishes you a happy holiday season and a prosperous and successful 2007. Be sure to make this a particularly gay celebration of everything positive that has happened to you during this past year.

Seasons Greetings from us all! ▼

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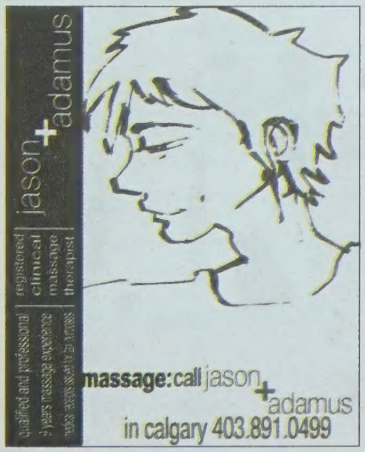

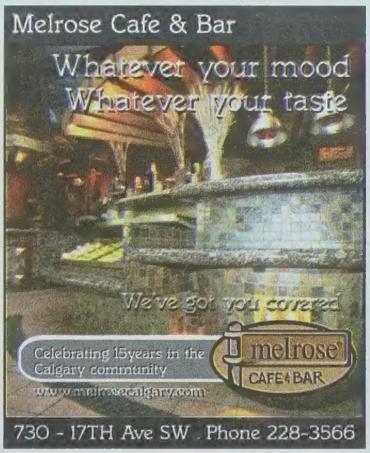

By Doug Ross

With the holiday festivities fast approaching, it's time to finalize those seasonal entertainment plans. So whether you're headed home to Toronto to spend time with family and friends, or whether you have simply chosen our great city as your holiday vacation destination, remember to pack your gay apparel, because you're going to need it! You know that you'll want to look fabulous while you're out on the town livin' large and puttin' it on charge.

So to kick things off in high style at the top of your "must see" list should be *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular* since that amazing holiday production, full of camp and kitsch, is finally crossing the border northbound to make its Canadian debut at The Hummingbird Centre for a total of eighty-four dazzling performances. Right up until New Year's Eve, that massive stage will overflow with spectacle and excitement as you watch flying reindeer, rapping elves, singing poinsettias and the world famous Radio City Rockettes strut their stuff. That's right, twenty of the most gorgeous pairs of gams imaginable will make you green with envy while they perform their legendary eye-high kicks and precision dance numbers. To say nothing of the fact that this opulent show is sure to provide every stitch queen with enough over-the-top costume ideas to last a lifetime!

And speaking of over-the-top, you can't afford to miss the extremely popular, hilarious drag comedy troupe The B-Girlz as they perform their brand new glamour-disco-cabaret-extravaganza, *The B-Girlz on Thin Ice!* at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre for a limited run. No seasonal tradition, from Christmas pageants to holiday shopping, is as sacred as the Girlz dance up a storm and sing live (no lip-sync here) medleys of pop songs from the 1970s to the current chartbusters during their unique, high energy Las Vegas style revue. So grab an eggnog, jingle your bells and get ready for plenty of high-schticking and hysterical laughter as those saucy Girlz prepare to unwrap their special packages just for you!

At that same theatre on December 18, the Toronto PWA Foundation will present its annual holiday production, *Starry Night*. This unique show, to be hosted by Canadian comic and television personality Elvira Kurt, will feature an outstanding line-up of our city's most talented, gay-friendly performers who are all donating their time and energy on behalf of this very worthy cause. You probably already know that the PWA Foundation exists to promote the health and well being of all people living with HIV/AIDS in Toronto by providing accessible, direct and practical support services. But did you also know that the foundation absorbs all expenses associated with *Starry Night* and presents it completely free to its clients? Well, now you do! So even if you won't be in town, please haul out your chequebooks and send that wonderful organization an extra large charitable donation for their selfless efforts on behalf of our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

Did the mention of siblings make you think of nieces and nephews and what gifts to get them? Yes, well me too. But did you really think those little scoundrels needed another battery-operated toy? (No, me neither, save those toys for us adults!) So instead, why not take them out to see a show? I'm sure that Ross Petty's riotous, hip-hop version of *Aladdin, The Magical Family Musical* would be the perfect ticket. That fractured fairy tale will play in the beautiful, historic Elgin Theatre until Christmas Eve. Appearing alongside the well-known Canadian cast members will be wrestling legend Bret "Hitman" Hart portraying the Genie of the Lamp. Camp followers, please remember to keep your eyes peeled for the hilarious shenanigans of "the widow Genny Bender" so that you're prepared to answer any questions from young enquiring minds that'll want to know!

An alternative choice of family event is the phenomenally successful Broadway musical hit *Wicked* that will be showcased at the Canon Theatre. This spellbinding theatrical event is making its return engagement to Toronto where it has already extended its run until the end of December. Although our beloved Dorothy from the land of Oz never actually appears onstage in this show.the smart, fiery and misunderstood Wicked Witch of the West teams up with the beautiful, ambitious and popular Good Witch of the North to overcome their differences and form an everlasting bond of friendship. The tickets to see *Wicked* are hotter than chestnuts roasting on an open fire, so do not delay in ordering yours!

If you are one of the lucky few who starts their holiday season earlier than most, and you just happen to be in town at the beginning of the month, then you absolutely must head over to Roy Thomson Hall on December 1 to catch sultry songstress Holly Cole performing *A Night Before Christmas*, before she begins her national tour. Relax and enjoy as that Halifax born, platinum-selling artist puts a special twist of spice into your mix with her unforgettable evening of old songs, new songs and holiday standards.

Last but not least, get out and be seen at the funky Gladstone Hotel when you attend *Sharron's Party*, that naughty evening of cabaret filled with "balls to the wall" singing, stories, interviews, name dropping and special holiday guests. Sharron Matthews always packs the house as the dynamic star of this exciting, crowd-pleasing night, so be prepared to laugh out loud—way out loud! And one of you lucky out-of-towners might even be the happy winner of a "Sharron's Bitch" t-shirt! Okay there's no time to lose, so make your list, check it twice and then simply Google the above-named shows and their respective showplaces to book your Toronto-based entertainment events!

Happy Holidays and Season's Greetings to all. ▼

Doug is a busy producer/casting director within the Toronto entertainment industry. He has just been contracted to ghostwrite a book for a locally-based television personality.

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Prolific and protean

By Megan Morman

Saturday night at Rak's Pinhouse in Saskatoon. Every single time Cheli rolled her ball, she fell down. Flailing on the floor, her panties gleamed white in the purple disco light of glow bowling. At first she pretended like she hadn't worn a miniskirt on purpose. Visiting from Montreal for a residency at AKA Gallery, performance artist Cheli Nighttraveller was on her very best (or worst) behaviour.

I reminded her that fellow visiting artist Mike Hoolboom was gay, like the rest of us, but she remained cheerfully single-minded in showing him a good time. He had really wanted to go bowling, we were told, and who were we to turn down an offer of fun with one of Canada's most important video artists?

Mike Hoolboom was in Saskatoon for a series of screenings at PAVED Arts, a local artist-run centre focusing on photography-based, electronic and new media art. PAVED is located in the emerging "cultural corridor" arts district of 20 Street West, in a building that they co-bought last June with AKA Gallery. Having received a grant from Heritage Canada's Cultural Spaces program in the summer, PAVED had to scramble to finish phase two of their renovations, including expanded space for media production facilities, before fall exhibitions opened.

Hoolboom's 2003 *Imitations of Life* was the first show in PAVED's new home theatre-style media gallery, running from October 12 – November 10. In the dark, den-like room, gallery visitors could sink into big puffy armchairs and watch Hoolboom's work on a large screen television. PAVED also arranged screenings of *Fascination*, his new Colin Campbell biopic, cosponsored by the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union's LGBTA Centre, and Public Lighting (2004) at the Broadway Theatre.

October brought a who's who of queer artists to Saskatoon, including Nighttraveller (performing *Binky Binky Bunny* at AKA Gallery) and her Calgary-based writer Anthea Black, and infamous Montreal photographer Evergon. But the community was abuzz about the Toronto-based Hoolboom; everyone had heard his name, but couldn't necessarily remember what he was famous for. "I heard he slept with Madonna when he was in high school," a friend told me, out of breath with barely hushed excitement.

Fascination is Hoolboom's biography of late queer video art pioneer Colin Campbell. Over his thirty-year career, Campbell gained international recognition for his campy humour and gender-bending, self-involved characters, until his death from cancer in 2001. (Several years ago, the first video of Campbell's I'd ever seen, *Sackville, I'm Yours*, had left me doubled over in helpless streams of giggles.) Despite all this, I felt a bit apprehensive walking into Hoolboom's early afternoon screening in the theatre at the U of S's art department. Sadly, my attention span for non-narrative video isn't always what it might be; for the layperson, can't 'experimental' be code for 'boring'? Thankfully my fears were unjustified.

In *Fascination*, Hoolboom combines interviews with Campbell's friends in the Toronto art community with archival film of the cold war, found footage and clips from Campbell's videos. It's not a traditional A&E biography. "This is a movie about you, not about Colin Campbell," he explains in the opening minutes of *Fascination*. Hoolboom is less concerned with enumerating facts about Campbell's life, focusing instead on his place in the community and loving relationships with friends. Hoolboom's story floats around Campbell, picturing his subject's context and the world around him more than the subject himself. *Fascination* says at least as much about the genre of biography and the medium of video as it does about Campbell.

The version we saw was, at seventy-five minutes, still in editing. Through the screening Hoolboom appeared to concentrate intensely, making notes in tiny, neat handwriting. (His meticulousness shows in the editing of his other work.) Like Hoolboom's images, my thoughts swirled around the screen, an image touching off a spiral of associations and ideas.

This is what he's known for; he steals bits from movies and television, plucking them right out of the collective media unconscious, and reassembles them to tell his own story. His early work, from the 1980s, frequently dealt with themes of the body, HIV, and transgressive sexualities. In his essay *Stealing Pictures* for PAVED's exhibition catalogue, Hoolboom writes, "Using someone else's pictures I become a ventriloquist. I 'throw' my voice."

"Mother said we would have to be careful what we thought, because that would become the world we would grow up in," states a woman in *The Game*, one of the ten short chapters which make up the seventy-five minutes of *Imitations of Life*. Each is collaged from layered scenes of Hollywood movies, newsreels, and found video. Together, they illustrate a sweeping commentary on childhood, the future and the role of pictures in shaping our realities, memories and dreams. Early on, in *Jake*, Hoolboom himself picks up the camera to film his young nephew, who he speaks both to and through. The longest, ninth segment *Imitations of Life* is an extraordinary work of meta science fiction. I was mesmerized: it's moving and eerie, simultaneously cynical and hopeful; through much of it I couldn't help feeling a kind of rumbling excited dread.

Mike Hoolboom won the third game of bowling that night. To my great shock, I'd won the first two. Our lane was the last to finish and Cheli had taken to squealing and chasing around the alley anyone who got a strike. It was time to go home.

Hoolboom, it turns out, hasn't actually slept with Madonna. Beginning in the mid-1990s, Madonna became a recurring motif for Hoolboom, in work like *Frank's Cock* (1994, winner of Best Canadian Short at the Toronto International Film Festival), *Dear Madonna* (1996), and recently *Public Lighting*. His 1998 book, *Plague Years: a Life in Underground Movies*, includes a hilariously explicit fake memoir detailing a high school fling with the then-teenaged superstar. I'm sure he'd be tickled to know how enthusiastically we'd mistaken his pictures for reality.

For more information about the work of Mike Hoolboom visit PAVED Arts online at **pavedarts.ca**. ▼

Photo: Collin Campbell, (Modern Love or Woman from Malibu) from Mike Hoolboom's Fascination. Image courtesy of Mike Hoolboom.

Megan Morman is a Saskatoon-based freelance thing doer and fan of foreign candies. Visit her online at populust.ca

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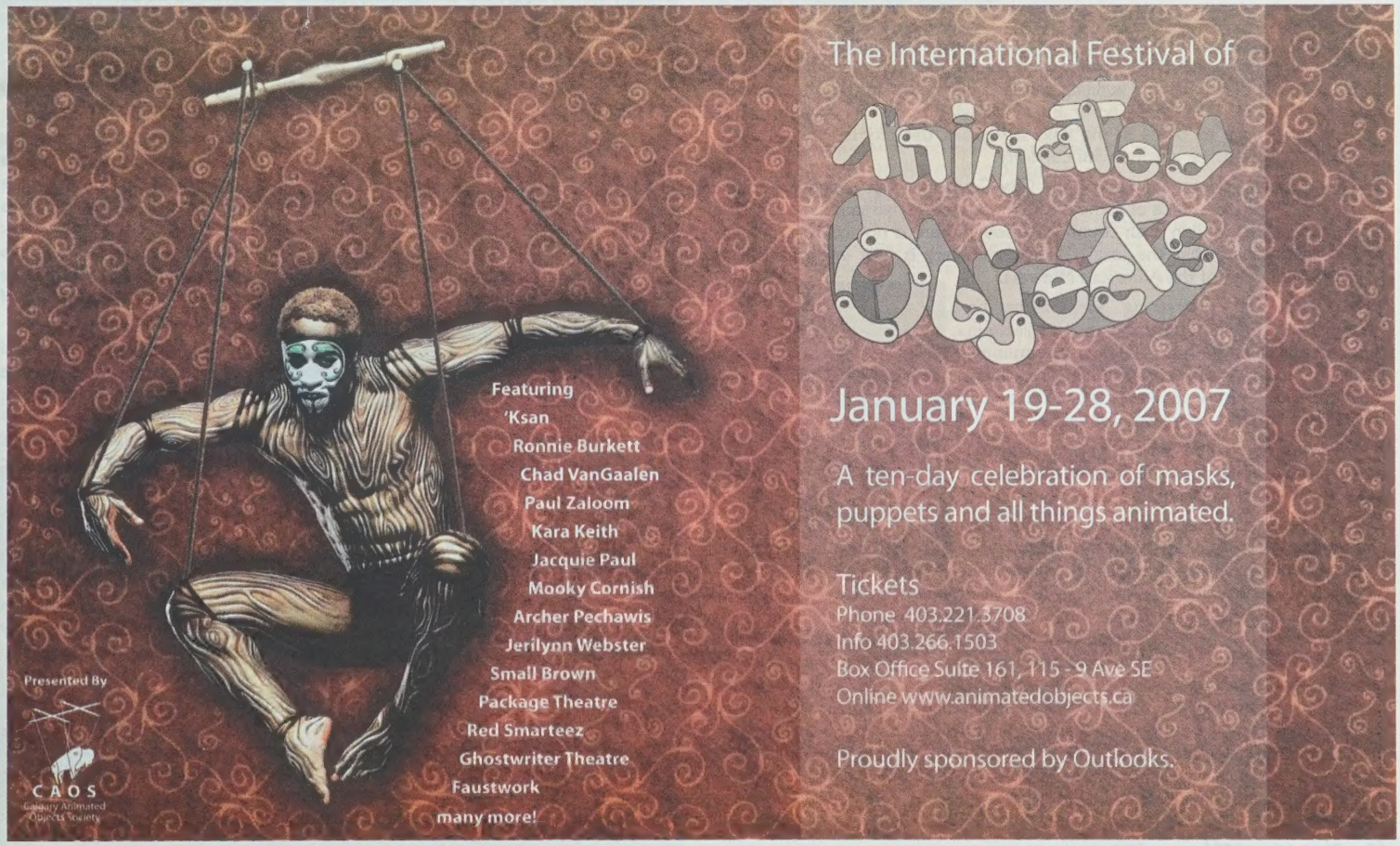

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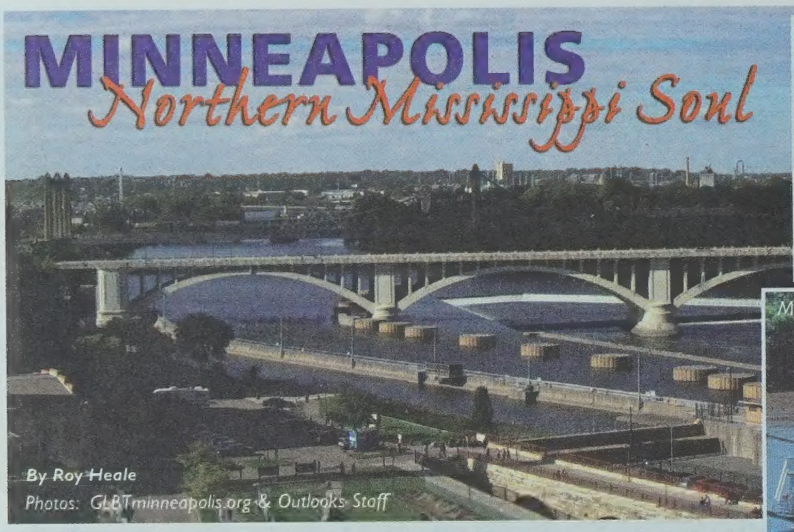
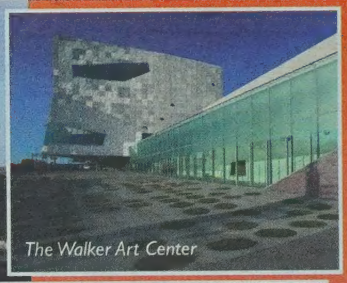


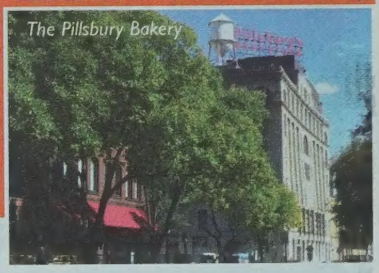
By Roy Heale
Photos: GLBTminneapolis.org & Outlooks Staff



The Walker Art Center

The Guthrie Theatre

Mississippi River



The Pillsbury Bakery

From the first moment when you arrive in Minneapolis you will instantly understand why Mary Richards tossed her hat into the air for seven years on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, set in this vibrant locale. There's a feeling in the air that surely originates in the strong affinity with arts and culture that are an historic legacy of Minneapolis.

With luminaries past and present on the Guthrie Theatre stage that include Jessica Tandy (*Fried Green Tomatoes, Driving Miss Daisy*), her husband Hume Cronyn (*Cocoon*) whom she met at the Guthrie and T.R. Knight (George, on *Grey's Anatomy*) it's not hard to understand the culture that *is* Minneapolis. Wherever there's a healthy arts community it seems like a thriving GLBT community is only a heartbeat away.

Open-minded, vibrant, friendly, safe and forward thinking—however you describe Minneapolis, it is an exciting new destination for the gay tourist. With the largest percentage of GLBT population of any city in the United States outside of San Francisco, it's not surprising that a gay-friendly welcome is guaranteed in this mid-western metropolis.

The Minneapolis cultural landscape is currently experiencing an arts explosion, with almost a half billion dollars being spent on new and upgraded infrastructure. With the new Public Library building, the stunning new Guthrie Theater, a new expansion to the Walker Art Center and a new wing at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and more to come in the next few years, this city is a rare treat for cultural aficionados, or anyone with curiosity.

Three openly gay men who sit on the City Council and an openly gay Senator have enabled the existence of some of the most progressive same-sex legislation anywhere to be found in Bush country. Although there is no actual gay village, it is abundantly clear that the local GLBT community is fully integrated in this cosmopolitan gem of the American Midwest.

Graves 601 Hotel room

Anything and everything you might be searching for on your gay vacation is available in Minneapolis. A vibrant GLBT community, fabulous food, great accommodations, lively nightlife and culture beyond imagination are waiting for you to experience and enjoy.

With the new trend toward boutique hotels, Minneapolis is ready and able to offer this type of lodging for the ultimate holiday experience.

The new Chambers Hotel opened in September of this year to great anticipation as a boutique design hotel, featuring a multi-million dollar contemporary and edgy art collection of original works from around the world. An intimate, deluxe service, high design, luxury complex with sixty rooms, an open-air courtyard, lobby bar, rooftop lounge and Chambers Kitchen restaurant, can only be described as an incomparable experience. For art lovers who've ever felt they didn't want to leave a gallery when the doors closed, the Chambers is like sleeping overnight in that gallery. Whether or not you consider yourself an art lover, the stunning design will leave you breathless. Be sure to check out the fire escape mural—a unique work of art unto itself. Add to this experience the luxurious rooms and friendly, efficient staff and this will prove to be a holiday or honeymoon experience to remember.

The larger twenty-one story Graves 601 Hotel launched in August of this year, adding another new landmark to the hotel scene in Minneapolis. Featuring an environment rich in design, modern art and state-of-the-art technology, it is located in the centre of town close to shopping, businesses and the Guthrie Theatre. Each room includes a wall mounted forty-two inch plasma screen television, two ambient light moods, a wireless digital keyboard for internet access, an edge-lit etched glass headboard depicting one of four Minneapolis scenes, a vast library of movie and music selections for download digitally and a top of the line mattress for a decadent night's sleep. In addition, you will experience incomparable bathroom elegance, out of this world for a truly pampered stay in this new brand of hotel.

For a more traditional hotel experience, the Marriott City Center offers full amenities in the heart of downtown—just a short walk to all that Minneapolis has to offer. Connected to all of downtown by the enclosed Skyways and near the theatres and nightlife, this is a location worth considering for your stay. A Sunday breakfast in bed with champagne and orange juice in the newly renovated rooms will help your recovery from the previous night's frivolity and set the tone to explore all that is offered in the heart of this city.

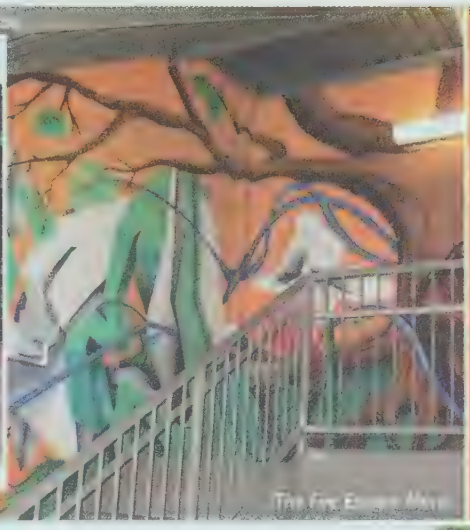
Chambers Hotel suite

Sparkling lakes, inviting trails and green spaces beautify this landscape where every resident lives within six blocks of a park or open space. It's possible to bike, hike, pedal or paddle all within the limits of downtown.

The mighty Mississippi River courses through the very heart of Minneapolis, providing spectacular riverwalks and skyline views of this urban playground. The city's history revolves around this river and today the local residents and visitors enjoy the historic landmarks along its riverbanks.

The historic Mississippi Riverfront district has transitioned from industrial to recreational land use, delighting outdoor enthusiasts with parks, picnic areas, walking trails, landmarks such as the Pillsbury Bakery and the only stone railroad bridge to cross the Mississippi. This history-rich neighborhood is a perfect afternoon retreat with restaurants, patios and shops for a complete escape from the nearby city across the river. You can experience a Segway magical history tour that is as close to a magic carpet ride as you are ever likely to get. If you've never ridden a Segway then you are in for a unique experience. Full training is provided before you head out to glide along the riverside trails and pathways.

Returning to the downtown side of the riverbank you can visit the Mill City Museum, which is the latest addition to Minnesota's statewide network of historic sites. From 1880 to 1930 Minneapolis was considered the Flour Milling Capital of the World and this museum rises eight stories from the ground in the original ruins of the Washburn A Mill, a National Historic Landmark. The elevator



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Millcitymuseum.org
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ride to the rooftop observation deck culminates in a spectacular view of the Mississippi River valley and downtown Minneapolis. In the museum's theatre a twenty-minute video provides an excellent fast-paced history of the region, which will make you feel like an expert local historian. If that's not enough for a trip back in time, the aroma of freshly baked bread will transport you to the past.

When the past comes together with the present, and looks to the future, there can be no better example than the historic Guthrie Theater. Back in 1960 an eager invitation from Minneapolis community leaders brought internationally acclaimed director Sir Tyrone Guthrie to the city to consider it as a possible home for his new theatre. In 1963 the original Guthrie Theater debuted with a modern-dress production of *Hamlet* on a unique thrust stage. Over forty years later, the spectacular new multi-million dollar Guthrie Theater complex opened in June of this year. This new performing arts centre with three stages remains true to the original concept with another thrust stage in an 1100-seat auditorium and the additions of a 700-seat proscenium and a 250-seat studio theatre. However, French architect Jean Nouvel has created an entire entertainment structure with restaurants, bars, a view of the Mississippi and an awe-inspiring atmosphere worthy of some of the finest performances by actors today and tomorrow. This bold venture is certain to ensure that the prolific Minneapolis theatre community, which is also the soul of this city, will continue to aspire to greater heights now and in the future, as this theatre's tradition deserves. A visit to this performing arts centre and a night at the theatre will be the highlight of your visit—guaranteed.

Dining in Minneapolis will be an adventure and will involve some very tough decisions. Wolfgang Puck's 20.21 at the Walker Art Center, versus Cue at the Guthrie Theater? No choice—you have to try them both! A really special place for breakfast is Hell's Kitchen, an easy decision for a truly unique experience. Even if you're not staying at the Chambers Hotel, you'll want to experience a multi-course dinner created by Chef Jean-Gorges at the Chambers Kitchen. An old police station is the setting for a dinner perfectly prepared at Five Restaurant and Lounge. Wait for the surprise of a Boys in Blue special dessert, and when you go to the washroom be sure they don't throw away the jail key. At Wild Roast Café you can expect a warm welcome from owners and partners Dean and Tom at their coffee house, where the 1903 fireplace is the centerpiece and their great light fare is a culinary delight to complement the relaxing at-home atmosphere. And of course there's always dinner on a Mississippi paddle-boat night tour for a truly unique, romantic dining experience.

Halfway between New York and Los Angeles but all the way out of the closet, Minneapolis offers unparalleled nightlife for the energetic gay traveller. After everything this cultural city has to offer, those with incredible stamina can party at approximately fifteen gay or gay-friendly bars, clubs and pubs. There's somewhere to drink and dance every night of the week and it's no wonder the locals are always out and about.

For those who enjoy shopping, there are several neighbourhoods close to downtown with boutiques and community style shops. For a retail adventure, The Mall of America is a must with over 520 stores, an amusement park and aquarium. With no sales tax on clothes this a perfect time to expand your wardrobe.

One of the best and most practical amenities of this city is Metro Transit, which includes light rail transit and buses. For $2.50 you can ride in comfort from the airport terminal to the heart of downtown.

The enthralling culture and soul of this city is only due to the incredible people who call Minneapolis home. The city's biggest asset is the warmth of its citizens. Everyone from bellhops to waiters, the directors of museums and galleries, actors and people on the street give forth a gay-friendly greeting. It's easy to understand the pride in their city, the pride for their community but their welcome goes beyond that of any other equally proud cosmopolitan city. Look out Big Apple and Broadway, there's a new Mary throwing her hat into the ring!

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Avoiding The Holiday Blues

By Peter Carlyle-Gordge

The looming Christmas, Hannukah and New Year's holidays fill some people with anxiety and dread, but there's no reason to be singing the blues or feeling like a leper without a friend in the world.

The hype around the holidays tells you you'll be happy if you keep on buying.

It also implies that big happy families traditionally get together and have a wonderful time, so it's hardly surprising some people feel let down. If you're gay this feeling may be worse because you may have always felt you don't fit in. You may have expectations that are unrealistic.

If you've never felt comfortable in the old family setting, then the feelings of isolation are worse. If you have no partner and few if any friends, the holidays may become a trial by ordeal, with you praying for time to speed up so the sadness, anger, depression or discomfort may disappear.

Not being thrilled with these festive holidays isn't just a gay problem. A lot of heterosexuals also feel lonely or left out. The hyped expectations don't pan out. And alcohol-fuelled family gatherings often end in tears with old grievances and sibling rivalries quickly boiling up and leading to rows.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way.

Therapist Randi Hunter who offers GLBT counselling at Winnipeg's Rainbow Resource Centre says your feelings depend a lot on how 'out' you are to family and friends. "If you're not out with your family and don't feel acknowledged for who you are, that creates stress," she says. "It may be that you don't want these ties to your old family and there's no reason to go there if it's not a positive experience. You can create your own 'family' or traditions."

She says it makes no sense to spend holiday time with people who are not supportive, so ignore the tradition that says you have to be with the old family. Get together with friends who do know you and support you.

Heather Mackenzie, a psychiatric nurse therapist at Winnipeg's Health Sciences Centre, shares that view. She's worked with many GLBT people and says vacations can elevate stress levels and depression.

"It can be a time of feeling uncomfortable for many people, gay or straight," she says. "The key is having a good social support network especially if you don't have a partner to share with. Today there are many 'family' models and you can make your own rather than buying into the traditional model shown in old TV programs."

She says she knows some gay couples who get into celebrating Christmas far more than she and her own more traditional straight family does. "They party and do the place up with decorations and invite many of their accepting friends in," she says. "They really do celebrate and have a good time."

Mackenzie also notes that people who tend to get isolated and depressed around Christmas often have trouble relating and socializing at other times too. It can be a serious problem. She says it's good to be aware of how you feel and to have a crisis line phone number handy if you know you're going to have a hard time.

"We all need to feel acknowledged and supported and it's good to talk to someone about these feelings," she says. "Plan ahead and make sure you have something to keep you busy. If you know one or two other lonely people, reach out and invite them over and you can share a dinner or go out to a restaurant."

She says volunteering is also good if you're lonely. Lots of food banks, soup kitchens and charities need help and it will get your mind off of your own problems and put them in perspective. If you really hate Christmas you can also take a vacation and just get away from the hype and bad feelings.

Longtime GLBT activist Chris Vogel and his partner Richard North love Christmas and the holidays. Together for over thirty years, Vogel and North came right out to both sets of parents and everyone else when they were young.

"My attitude was that if the families didn't like it they could lump it," says Vogel. "We were right out and in your face but after that everything was fine because both families accepted us and we always spent Christmas with either one set of parents or both. Sometimes we held Christmas or New Year gatherings at our own place and it all worked quite well."

They love decorating their home and love the season, but Vogel knows many who hate it. "I have one friend who used to go and visit the old family and hated every minute of it," he says. "There would be hysterical fights at these family gatherings. Oddly enough, when he retired he actually moved back to where the old family was."

He says people who feel lonely have the power to change things. "You don't need your birth family and if you're seeking their approval for who you are, you may be very disappointed," he says. "You should stop caring what other people think and get on with your own life. Get rid of the self-pity and make some new friends. It takes effort but it's better than sitting moaning and feeling sorry for yourself."

He also recommends volunteering at difficult times. "It's a good way to meet other people," he adds. "I believe there is someone for everyone in this world but you won't find them if you stay at home complaining."

Non-traditional families can have lots of fun. Just ask gay marriage commissioner Don Bowler, who is also a fulltime chef. Some of his family gatherings include his ex-wife, a current male lover, his two straight sons and his grandson as well as his sister and brother-in-law.

Everyone knows Don was married for a long time, divorced and now considers himself gay. He has been honest and open and it seems to work well.

"There is a lot of loneliness at Christmas because many families are now separated geographically," he says. "It doesn't matter whether you're gay or straight. A straight couple may have kids living in totally different areas of the country today."

He grew up in the country with traditional family gatherings. "We'd visit one aunt at Christmas and another at New Year's," he says. "It was a happy time and I think getting together is important, no matter who you include in your family."

▼

Peter Carlyle-Gordge is a former Manitoba correspondent for Maclean's *and* The Financial Post. *He has written for most major magazines and newspapers in Canada as well as broadcasting on the national and international networks of CBC Radio. As honorary press secretary to the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba in the 1980s, Peter was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal for services to Canada in 2003.*

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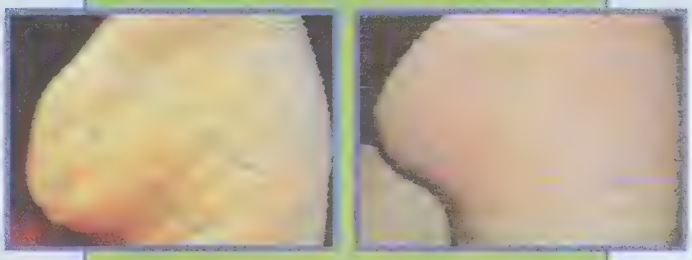

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Christmas Shopping FOR DUMMIES

By Josh Murray

Shopping is often a joy. It can be full of adventure—creating special times that are both jovial and entertaining.

Christmas is not one of those times.

Malls are packed. Shoppers are manic and even the local Santa gets easily fatigued from his perch atop the faux snow on Candy Cane Lane. So this year, make it simple. A number of unique gifts are in stock now that may just suit the taste of that one person that is impossible to please, year after year.

Like fruitcake and mistletoe, there are a few Christmas mainstays that we can never escape. An annual slew of timely CD releases is such an example—a December tradition that we either loathe or love, depending on your holiday outlook. This year, eloquent Aimee Mann, Spanish heartthrob Luis Miguel, country crooner Brad Paisley, a momma-less Wynonna Judd, pop icon James Taylor and even 80s hard-rockers Twisted Sister make the list of celebrity acts cashing in on Christmas. But two releases on the list stand out as possible classics—CDs that will provide festive listening all season.

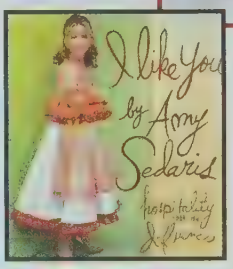
Canadian chanteuse Sarah McLachlan has sold approximately thirty million discs around the globe and she will undoubtedly bump that figure up as *Wintersong*, her first full-length holiday CD debuts. The disc is a mix of classic Christmas tunes, original material and re-workings of modern holiday tracks like John Lennon's hopeful "Happy Xmas (War is Over)" and Joni Mitchell's stark "River."

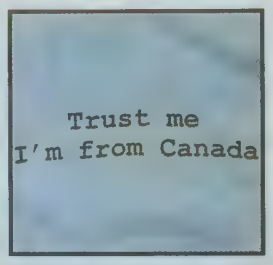
A bit more jubilant, though no less sentimental, is Bette Midler's first holiday collection. *Cool Yule* is comprised of tracks that are heavily influenced by Midler's recent foray into the songbooks of Peggy Lee and Rosemary Clooney. Her rendition of the title track is a big band, swing number and her take on "Mele Kalikimaka" pays homage to her childhood in Hawaii. Less unique, though still entertaining, are her take on classics like "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and, for fans of her early 90s work, she has included a revised-for-the-holidays cover of her own smash "From a Distance."

If there is no room left on the CD rack, expand the library of a loved one with Amy Sedaris' *I Like You: Hospitality Under the Influence*. The New York-based comedienne takes a stab at entertaining, and, thankfully, she's far from Martha Stewart. Her guide to etiquette, cooking and general merriment is full of hilarious observations and advice on polite hosting in the company of drunken guests, gay friends and the elderly. Her humour is at-times off-colour but always refreshing. On items stained during a soirée, for example, she surmises, "Toss it. Chances are you've stained it before."

Quality one-liners are few and far between, as are signature phrases. "Make it work" has been immortalized, for fans of Life Network's *Project Runway*, by fashion guru Tim Gunn. And now he has been immortalized in plastic. A kitschy gift for any rabid fan of the reality series is the Tim Gunn bobblehead. Created by former *Runway* contestant and fashion designer Emmett McCarthy, the fashion toy is available online for $25 US at **emmettmccarthy.com**.

If camp is too much to handle this year, do some good in the world instead. The Product Red line supports the Global Fund which fights AIDS, TB and malaria in Africa. Created by rock star Bono, a 2006 Nobel Peace Prize nominee, and attorney Bobby Shriver of America's famed Kennedy family, the product line brings together some of the world's biggest brands, including Motorola, Gap and Converse. Proceeds from specially-designed items in the collections of each major retailer provide valuable medical help to a troubled continent that has been largely (and embarrassingly) ignored by the rest of the world.





To aid in the effort, technology giant Apple has jumped aboard with a sleek new design for its iPod nano (PRODUCT) RED in a vibrant shade of the product line's signature colour, red. The new, special edition iPod holds up to 1000 songs with its 4GB of storage and is available now at **apple.ca**. $10 US from every purchase goes directly to support the Global Fund and its incredibly worthy cause.

If you've found another way to support charity and now are concerned with admittedly less pressing matters like home decor, Ikea has a new print for 2006 that has already become a top seller. The *Pjatteryd* features an iconic image of actress Audrey Hepburn. The canvas is a sophisticated, stylish addition to the wall. The hanging measures approximately three feet square and currently sells for $79.99 at stores across the country.

If your shopping budget allows for a tad more than that price tag, consider surprising the biggest couch potato in your household with a Tivo digital video recorder. Like Kleenex and Q-tips before it, the name Tivo has now become synonymous with the high tech devices but the actual brand of service has been unavailable in Canada until now. While the Tivo box itself is still only for sale in the US, the monthly service is available throughout Canada thanks to recent expansions across the border. Tivo is simple to set up and easy to use. For about $13 a month, you could be commercial-free for good. While *Sex and the City's* Miranda Hobbes was obsessed with a "Season Pass" (the Tivo function that allows you to record each episode of a specific show in an entire television season), the benefits of the device also include pausing live TV and searching full cable listings by keyword or even by actor. Skip across the border to pick up one of Tivo's boxes at just about any major electronics retailer. The recorder began with only a forty-hour capacity but the new eighty-hour model, retailing for around $250 US, allows you to go to extremes, recording up to 160 episodes of sitcoms like *The Office* or *Will and Grace*.

Whiny socialite Karen Walker of the latter comedy hit was quoted as saying "Fashion shouldn't be funny." But she obviously hadn't visited **Palmercash.com**. The hip fashion site sells t-shirts with slogans that are above and beyond the usual fare. This season's favourite? A men's baby blue T emblazoned with the words "Trust Me. I'm from Canada." Given today's world politics, it may just be the smartest shirt you could wear as you travel home for the holidays.

This season, whether you're adding style to a musty closet or adding music to a massive collection, the unique gifting choices listed here may require a bit of a jaunt via car or the Internet. But the recipient will truly be thrilled when a gesture does some good in the world or even just showcases your reality TV know-how. ▼

Josh Murray is a freelance writer who divides his time between New York and Vancouver. For more information, visit joshmurray.ca.

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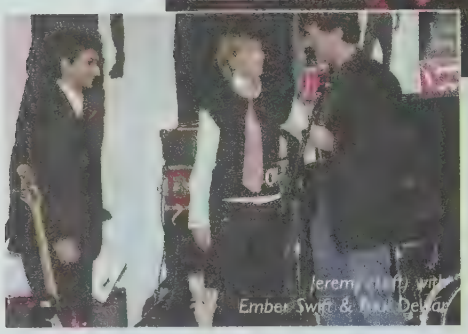

Jeremy (left) with Ember Swift & Paul Dewar

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Left-Right: Michelle, Deputy Chief Larry Hill, Barbara Hill, Paul Dewar, Jessica Freedman & Bill Siksay

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In The Blood

By Dale Smith

Tanya Huff is no stranger to the Canadian science fiction market—after all, she's published twenty-two books and three short story collections in the past twenty years. But now the openly lesbian author is moving to the next level of success—having one of her most well-known book series turned into a television show, fifteen years after the first volume was published.

Huff's *Blood Price* came out in 1991, featuring ex-cop Vicki Nelson getting involved in a supernatural case and meeting bisexual vampire Henry Fitzroy (who also happened to be the bastard son of Henry VIII) while at the same time re-igniting her off-again on-again romance with her former homicide partner, Mike Celucci. Along the way, as their triangle got more complicated, Huff never shied away from the gritty realities of the relationship, nor did Henry renounce his bisexuality in order to devote himself to Vicki—as so often happens in many a badly written tale. Henry still romanced Vicki, and still had his relationship with Tony Foster, a reformed street hustler from Toronto's gay district. And now those books will be hitting the small screen under the title *Blood Ties*. "They have been optioned pretty much continuously since 1997," Huff explains. "First from Tony Danza's production company, who had the option on it for about six years. We suspected that he was looking at it as a vehicle for him to play Celucci. A couple of other smaller companies had it after that, but when Kaleidoscope Entertainment picked it up, they were the first people who were really intent from the very beginning on making this into a series."

Rather unusually, Kaleidoscope has involved Huff in the process of creating the series from her books. "They're under absolutely zero obligation to involve me at all," Huff says. "I sell them the rights, and they can do what they want with the options, they don't have to involve me in any way, shape or form. It's like once you sell somebody a shirt you no longer get to tell them what tie to wear it with. But these guys, they've just been wonderful. They keep in contact with me when new stuff comes up."

Huff's enthusiasm is palpable—and contagious. "When we got the contract, I actually had my agent put a rider in the contract, which says, 'Author gets to visit set'," she says. "Usually they hate having the author on the set, because the last thing they need is someone having an artistic hissy fit in the background going 'that's not what I wrote!' It's the last thing you need when you're dealing with a twenty million dollar production, and the guys have been on set for seventeen hours already and they just want to go home. So I actually had them add 'Author gets to visit set', and their lawyer added in a corollary 'Author must behave herself'."

But it gets better for Huff. "The coolest thing for me personally is that they're letting me write an episode. They're taking a massive chance on this—there is absolutely nothing that says that because you can write novels, you can write for television—they are two completely different skill-sets. Novels are very insular, you're working by yourself, you have no input until you hand it into your editor. With scripts it's input constantly, all the time. While they were still in Toronto, before they moved the show to Vancouver, I got to go into Toronto and sit in the writing room for a couple of days and learn how to break it, and the writers have been so wonderful."

Kaleidoscope was also gracious enough to let Huff see the audition tapes to see whom they would be casting as the characters she put to page fifteen years ago. So far, Huff is impressed. "When you got the three of them together—Christina Cox who is playing Vicki, Dylan Neil who is playing Celucci, and Kyle Schmid is playing Henry—the chemistry was amazing. The funny thing with Christina is that we used to be huge fans of *FX the Series*. She was the sidekick of the main character and we used to sit there going 'Yeah, she could play Vicki' so when they told me that Christina was one of the actresses they were looking at, I was, 'Oh my god, that's so great.'"

But as with all translations, there are changes. "One of the changes is because you need more characters in a show where you've got to come up with twenty-two episodes, as opposed to five books, the last two of which you can't use. They've made Corinne an actual regular character—a much stronger character—which gives Vicki another woman to play off. She's being played by Gina Holden."

One of the biggest changes, though, is the loss of Tony Foster—but not because of any squeamishness over the gay character, but rather because Tony has gone on to star in his own series of novels, Huff's latest trilogy (*Smoke and Shadows*, *Smoke and Mirrors* and the most recent, *Smoke and Ashes*).

"Tony can't be included, because that means that we can't sell the Tony books separately," Huff explains. "It means that Tony has been tied to the *Blood* books and we can't ever do a Tony series. Now it is easy for me to take Henry out of an outline of the Tony books, but I certainly can't take Tony out. So Henry is tied to the *Blood* books, but by not putting Tony in *Blood Ties*, we've actually managed to open the possibility of him getting his own series someday, of the *Smoke* books are getting a series."

The possibility of that series is already being talked about—with Here! TV in the US having expressed interest in picking them up.

One aspect that has survived the translation from page to screen is Henry's sexuality. According to the writers, Henry is still bi—an element that would almost certainly have been dropped a few years ago or if this were on an American network. "They're not making it overt as it's still an eight o'clock show," Huff says. "But the writers have said that it's still there, certainly honouring that within the limits."

But in twenty years of writing science fiction, Huff has noticed some changes in the market. "It's funny, over the past twenty years, things as a whole have gotten a lot more conservative—or maybe I have," she muses. "There are things in the *Blood* books that you're just not seeing anymore. Lines that I don't think would go through now, but as far as putting queer characters in—I've never had any problem with it. My last three books, the main character was an out gay character—Tony. My fourth book, *The Firestone*, was really a coming-out story, and you can find a gay character in every single one of my books, even if they're not the main character. I've got an extremely good editor—my editor allows whatever is necessary to tell the story, and if that's part of the story, it goes."

With *Blood Ties* airing in the New Year, Huff is looking forward to doing more television as well as novels. "Novels get a little lonely after twenty years," she jokes. She's hoping to do another script for *Blood Ties* if it gets renewed for a second season and possibly even doing production work for the concept she is developing to bring the *Smoke* series to screen. But for Huff, the future has never looked brighter. ▼

Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work also regularly appears in Capital Xtra and Ottawa Xpress, and he has previously written for XY Magazine.

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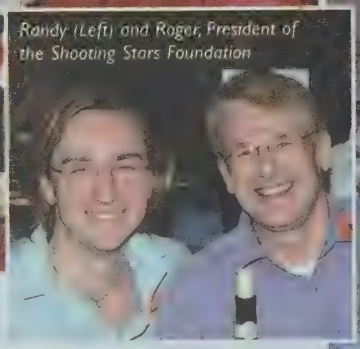
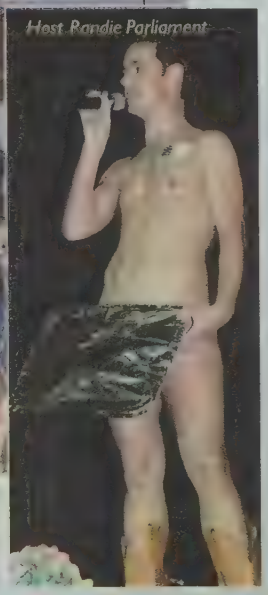

Randy (Left) and Roger, President of the Shooting Stars Foundation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Tristan

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HOROSCOPE

December is hot, hot, hot. Should we blame it on global warming or the rush of six planets in feisty, fiery Sagittarius that heats up the cosmos? Don't sit and chill. Get Out and melt a few snowballs. Ho, ho, ho.

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Proud Rams simply will not be able to sit at home this December. You'll crave adventure and yearn to travel. So why limit yourself to the usual? Plot an international itinerary that is guaranteed to get you Out and about when six planets posit in Sadge. However, if time and money are tight, fix your sights on exotic delights a bit closer to home. Trim a few trees down the block.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Queer Bulls will feel lusty and very sexy this December. You'll be a force with whom to be reckoned and will attract anyone that you set your sights on. Spread your joy around. Remember that hesitation is a buzz killer. Make your best moves while six planets sit in Sadge and don't be stingy with your affections. Spike the eggnog while you roast a few chestnuts. Ouch!

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Pink Twins will be forced to face relationship issues head on this December. Are there unresolved problems that are creating an uncomfortable undercurrent? Are you giving too much or too little? (Remember, it is better to give than to receive.) For those who are trawling the bars with their portable mistletoe, seek some new haunts filled with a bunch of merry elves.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

A cavalcade of planets in Sagittarius focuses more of your efforts on work this December. Oh goodie. Pink Crabs will find themselves burning the midnight oil on the job like just another old Cratchett. Yes, you will be very productive but don't aspire to be an office drone. Find time to hang the balls, stuff the stockings and make very merry.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

Proud Lions will be unleashed and on the prowl this December. 'Tis the season to have festive fun, so party hearty and maneuver among the various movers and shakers. You'll have great energy reserves, so seek and accept as many invitations as you can fit on your blackberry. Ah, but will you overdo and imbibe a bit too much? We can only hope so!

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

The focus will be on family and home issues this December while six planets in Sagittarius stoke your hearth. Don't be surprised if the huddled masses descend upon your humble abode for a little holiday cheer. As far as family is concerned, queer Virgins may reach a wall, but these walls are surmountable. The most important thing is to be true to yourself, bad hairstyle notwithstanding.

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

You are apt to say one thing too many when a pride parade of planets in Sagittarius make havoc with your communication skills. Oh who cares? Even though gay Libras are usually diplomatic and eloquent, the world will be very forgiving this December. But just to be on the safe side, why not just let your actions speak louder and prouder than your words?

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

Proud Scorps will be flush with funds this December. Bank on those six planets in Sagittarius to bring you fiscal luck and fortune. With a bit of research, you can carefully plant your small nut so it can eventually grow into a tall money tree. Or throw caution to the wind and just enjoy your gotten gains. Will you overspend on a few holiday trinkets? They hope so!

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

The spotlight will find you no matter where you go or where you try to hide. Blame those six planets in your own sign for lighting up your tree with neon. December brings not only fame and glory, but also a bit of notoriety, which can make you especially attractive. Reach Out and take the world by storm, gay Archer. Share your gifts and don't keep your intentions under wraps.

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Pink Caps give and can receive this December. Make the most of your karma by volunteering for a worthy gay charity. You may find yourself wedged next to the celebrity du jour at a holiday party. Each opportunity can become an opportunity of a lifetime. Don't foul it up by stringing mistletoe on a wire and hanging it over your head.

AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

Friends will be your holiday gift this December. Six Sagittarian planets will make you ground zero for all sorts of social festivities. Plan accordingly, Aqueerius, and stock up on goodies. As you pour the eggnog and hang your tinsel, think of ways to expand your usual social circle. I've heard that those eight tiny reindeer are quite the party animals....

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

Guppies will find themselves cast in the role of professional intermediaries this December. Whether it's planning the office holiday party or divvying up the bonuses, it will seem that you can do no political wrong. You'll dive in the corporate pool and swim with the big fish. But don't get too big for your britches, buddy. You may find those Santa pants begin to pinch after a while.

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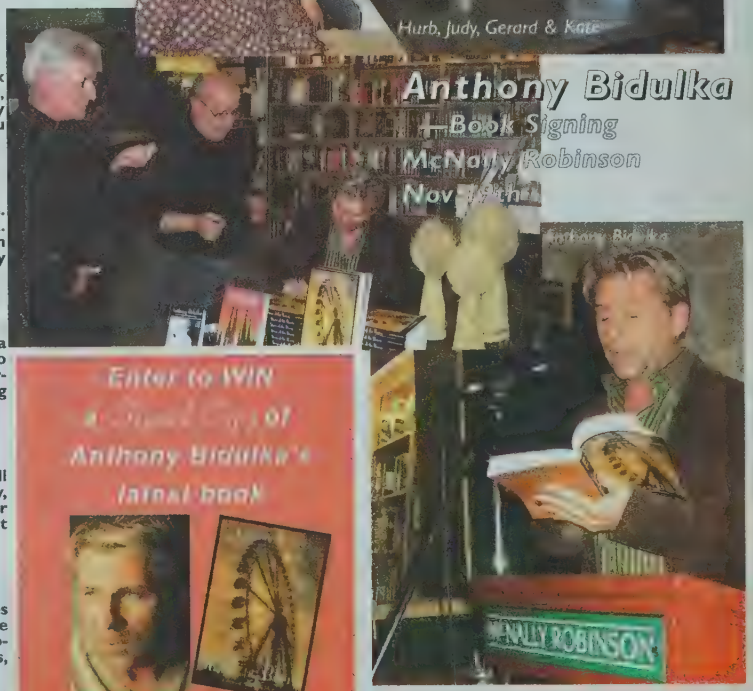
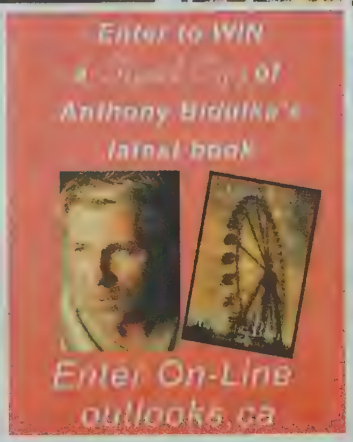
Nov 18 Hillhurst Community Hall





Celebrating the Sublime with Some Strings Attached

By Matt Salton

This January, prepare to embrace a sense of wonder you perhaps haven't felt in many years at the 2007 *International Festival of Animated Objects*. This unique and wondrous ten-day celebration of art in puppetry and mask is entering its third season here in Calgary and is the only festival of its kind in English-Canada.

"This is a magical event that makes one feel like a child again," says Xstine Cook, the curator-producer of the festival.

But hang on one minute—this isn't Shari Lewis and Lambchop singing the alphabet; most of these shows are aimed primarily at us big kids.

Take for example the show *Get off the Cross Mary!* directed by Trevor Anderson and written by Berend McKenzie. The play is about a gay puppet in a bit of a slump who decides that directing a disco-musical production of *The Passion* and also casting himself as Jesus will mark his big comeback. "That show is just sick," Cook says. "It is flat-out f***ing hilarious."

"Out" performer Ronnie Burkett will return to Calgary for a very special evening before he sets off to perform his new show in Australia. Burkett is widely perceived to be the foremost marionette artist here in Canada and revered throughout the world. He has made special appearances at every previous festival. He will be reading from his latest work *Billy Twinkle: Requiem for a Golden Boy* and speaking of his love for the craft.

Another show not to miss is the *Dolly Wiggler Cabaret* which features Cirque du Soleil clown Mooky Cornish and stand-up comedian Cory Mack hosting an evening in which all of the festival's artists are invited to perform. "Paul Zaloom's hilarious Punch & Judy show will headline the cabaret this year," says Cook.

Formerly of the Bread & Puppet Theatre in Vermont, Paul Zaloom—who is now working out of Los Angeles—will be in town to present his latest work, *The Mother of All Enemies*. Zaloom, a political satirist and performance artist, uses the traditional Middle-Eastern art of shadow play to tell a decidedly less than traditional tale of a "queer secular humanist-Quaker-Buddhist-agnostic Arab artist" who must thwart off a colourful mix of adversaries like the Christian Ex-Gay movement, Al Qaeda and Homeland Security. "Ronnie Burkett was quite impressed that Zaloom will be in attendance," Cross says.

But the programme that is closest to Xstine Cook's heart is entitled *Our Traditions*. This epic spectacle will take place in the Jack Singer Concert Hall on January 25 at 7:30pm. "It features 'Ksan, a traditional masked dance troupe that has been performing since the 70s, performing a traditional Gitxsan mask performance with traditional drumming. The tribe comes from Hazleton, BC, and leaves only to perform at special events such as the summer Olympics in Seoul. In addition, Archer Pechawis, a two-spirited, half-breed media integrated performance artist and the talented Jerilynn Webster will lead some performance creation workshops with aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth. They will be working with the youth to fashion something based on their own personal experiences. So *that* work, plus Pechawis's and Webster's own performances, plus those of 'Ksan makes for a packed evening of entertainment."

Remember to check out the festival's fabulous opening night gala bash at Victoria's Ballroom on 17 Avenue, featuring it-boy songster Chad VanGaalen and rocker Kara Keith (who incidentally both have animated projects they will be screening at the gala) strutting their stuff amongst a carnival of merriment including balloon artists, body painters, shadow puppet and mask making kiosks.

To purchase tickets for any of these events please call the Vertigo Theatre at 403-221-3708. Call CAOS for more information on the festival at 403-266-1503, or go to the website (currently being updated): **animatedobjects.ca** ▼

Matt Salton has been programming the reelout queer film & video festival in Kingston for the past six years. He currently lives in Calgary where he is studying film & video production. He can be contacted at reelpublicit

Photo by Sean Dennie, Makeup by luciebrouillard.com, Model David Parent

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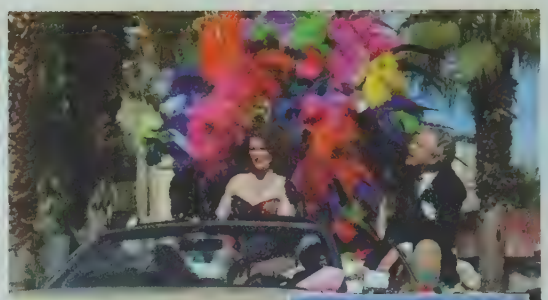

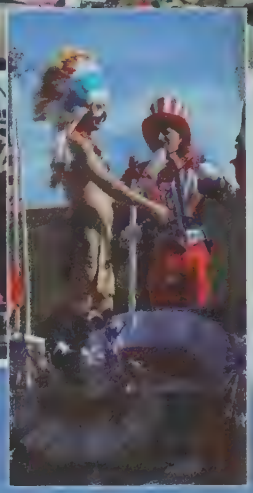

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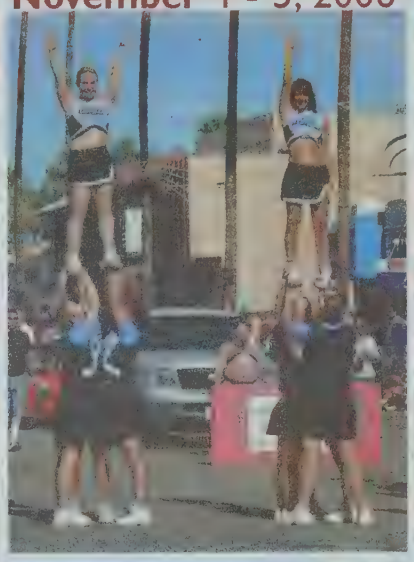

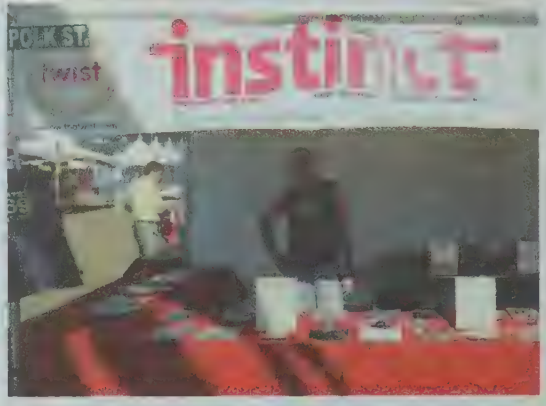

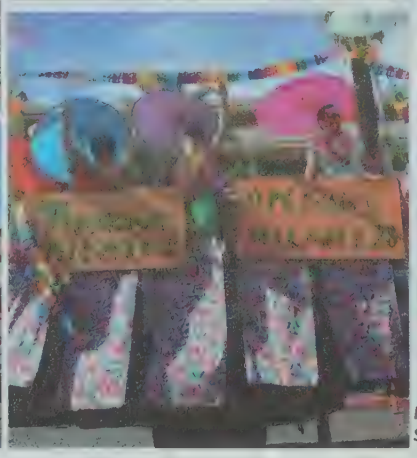

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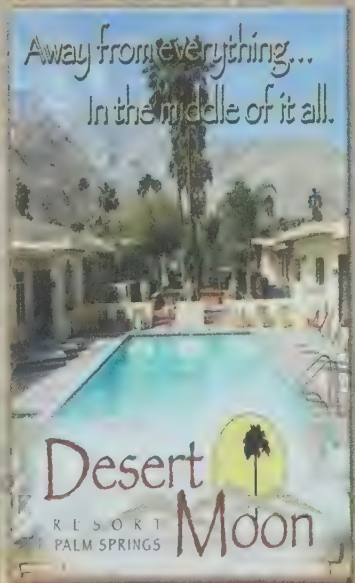

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Lesbian Show Garners Emmy Nomination

By Dale Smith

The British seem to always be a step ahead of North Americans when it comes to provocative and edgy television. After all, this is the land that brought us the original *Queer as Folk* and *Little Britain*, and audiences have never looked back.

They're at it again with a series called *Sugar Rush*, based on the widely acclaimed Julie Burchill novel about growing up lesbian in Brighton. *Sugar Rush* airs in Canada on OUTtv, the network's biggest program acquisition in its five-year history. The show has recently won a Stonewall Award in the UK, and an International Emmy in the Children and Young People Category. Given the quality of the writing and the acting, this is hardly surprising.

The series is centred on the character of Kim (played by Olivia Hallinan), and her relationship with her straight best friend, Maria Sweet, aka Sugar (played by Lenora Crichlow). Kim and her family have just moved to Brighton, and she immediately falls under Sugar's spell.

"She's going through all the problems of adolescence," explains Hallinan. "Your typical teenager in every way in that she's quite insecure and everything's going wrong, and nothing's her fault, and in that respect a lot of people could relate, but on top of that, she's having to deal with coming to terms with her sexuality and her lust for the most popular girl in the school."

Sugar, however, is a bit of hell on heels. At fifteen, she's hard living, hard drinking and has her way with any boy around—much to Kim's dismay. "At the beginning, Sugar is very self-centred," Crichlow admits. "The friendship with Kim is sort of finding its feet, and by the end of series one, they've really got a friendship worth talking about. As you watch series one, you can see Sugar just using Kim, but by the end you can see that there's a genuine friendship there. Sugar learns a lot about herself through Kim, and by the end Kim stands up for herself and says to Sugar that this isn't how friends treat each other."

"The friendship more than anything grows," Hallinan says. "They just understand each other, and Sugar is someone who's tough, someone that everyone wants to be, and gradually her barriers are breaking down and the real Sugar is revealed, and it's only with Kim that she can let her guard down really. Kim's sexuality is revealed halfway through the series, and things take a turn there. It's a big roller-coaster ride, she's growing up, her family are getting more and more dysfunctional, and her sexuality."

And there is part of what sets Sugar Rush apart from its contemporaries—the frank and honest portrayal of a young closeted lesbian. "She's only just discovered that she is gay, and she's having to come to terms with these new feelings," Hallinan says. "The feelings that, whether you're gay or not, that everyone experiences the first kind or rush of love, the first big crush on someone—so she's going through a lot. By series two, it's eighteen months later, she's grown up and she's more comfortable, and you definitely see a more confident and self-aware Kim."

Series two also sees huge changes for the character of Sugar. "The relationship takes a full three-sixty and it's Sugar who finds herself needing Kim's support," Crichlow says. "The lines are so blurred, and Kim is out and proud by this point and she's discovering new relationships, and for Sugar that's always going to be prickly because they're more than friends but they're not lovers, so she can't be jealous and she's not a lesbian, so she's not sure. It's a really nice mix of emotions and feelings, and there's something for everyone to identify with, with the jealousies and insecurities, and all that sort of thing—it's all there."

Still, a show about a fifteen year-old lesbian raises a few eyebrows both here and abroad. "Even here in the UK, when people heard it was a schoolgirl lesbian drama, there was some outrage and shock," Hallinan says. "People were expecting something titillating, and we got quite a lot of publicity surrounding it, but what you see is something very honest, very frank, very real, it's dealt with in a way that's not meant to shock—her sexuality is just part of the story and it's part of Kim—you deal with it, you just accept it."

> "Still, a show about a fifteen year-old lesbian raises a few eyebrows"

"The family issues, and the friendship issues are just as important to all the storylines as her sexuality," Crichlow adds. "It's not the dominating factor, and it's not out there to say 'ooh, look how racy we can be, or look how rude we can be,' which is really what makes it more acceptable or even really refreshing for the British audience. A lot of shows that deal with lesbian issues, either they're trying too hard to shock or trying to reach the male straight audience by pushing that sort of thing, but Sugar Rush is a nice teen drama that deals with it really sensitively and matter-of-factly, and just as a part of Kim's character and not as her defining thing."

The family issues are one of the strongest storylines of the series. Kim's unconventional family is certainly a reflection of changing times and social mores.

Her father is the domestic one and her mother acts as though she's the teenager. And then there's her brother, who believes that he comes from another planet. As well, the neighbours are a gay couple with a teenage son of their own.

"What's a normal family now?" Crichlow asks. "When I was growing up, I remember thinking that my family was very abnormal. There isn't a norm really anymore. Kim's family is brilliant because there's so much potential for comedy, but they're characters rather than stereotypes, and it helps to understand Kim's angst because she isn't from a normal family—which I don't think any teenager would think they were from a normal family even if they were, because families are complicated."

For both Hallinan and Crichlow, the series was an overwhelmingly positive experience for the both of them. Both are saddened to see that the show hadn't been renewed for a third series.

"What's a normal family now?"

"For me it's been a huge learning experience in every aspect," Crichlow says. "Winning a Stonewall award—Stonewall is a political group that fights for the rights of gays and lesbians in Britain—it was very humbling us for us." She also sees the larger impact of the series as it shatters stereotypes. "A young teenage lesbian girl not shaving her head, putting on a jumper and being butch, but who's a beautiful character and a beautiful person. The biggest impact for me is how much appreciation there's been for a show like this to be aired and to be mainstream on a main channel."

"I will miss Sugar Rush a lot," Hallinan says. "I'll miss being part of such a brilliant show really, because I think there isn't much really good drama out there, and I think it will be hard to do something that I feel as much love for, and the character as well, who was such a brilliant character to portray. The reactions we've had makes it all worthwhile." ▼

Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work also regularly appears in Capital Xtra and Ottawa Xpress, and he has previously written for XY Magazine.

Photos Courtesy of OUTtv

Success Telling The Truth

Thom Fitzgerald

By Ralph Higgins

In a relatively short space of time, Nova Scotian writer and director, Thom Fitzgerald, has earned an enviable reputation among writers, critics, directors and film lovers. His latest offering is *3 Needles*, which garnered the Award for Excellence in Direction at the Atlantic Film Festival and received a standing ovation at the premiere. It was an opening presentation at the International AIDS conference in Toronto and has been endorsed by the United Nations—the first commercial film to participate in the UN's Global Media AIDS Initiative. Fitzgerald was nominated for the prestigious Directors Guild Award for Best Direction of a Feature Film. Filmed over a two-year period in South Africa, Thailand, Halifax and Montreal, *3 Needles* will be released in the US on December 1, World AIDS Day, and given worldwide release for theatres and television on the same date.

By any standard, this is a major achievement.

Thom Fitzgerald first came to Halifax when he was nineteen years old. Born in New Rochelle and raised in New York City, he had already earned a BFA in performance and film from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art when he began a term at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. He fell in love with the area and adopted it as his home. Fitzgerald quickly became involved in the local theatre community—writing, performing in plays and creating short subject film projects, showing a gift for edgy, unconventional storytelling.

His first feature film, *The Hanging Garden*, announced the arrival of a major talent. The moving, surreal tale, with its decidedly Maritime atmosphere scooped up statues at Toronto, Vancouver and Argentinean film festivals, and Fitzgerald won the Claude Jutra award for Best Direction of a First Feature.

An impressive beginning, but before the corks were popped on the celebratory champagne, Fitzgerald was already at work on his next project. The quirky film, *Beefcake*, is a kind of fictionalized documentary on the muscle mags of the 1950's. A very different story from *The Hanging Garden* but laced with the same black humour, poignancy and eroticism that have become recognized Fitzgeraldian elements.

In *The Event*, when questions are raised about a man's death from AIDS, we see the impact of grief and guilt on his family and friends as they confront the issues of loss, mercy, the need for justice and the individual's right to dignity. In the restrained, focused performances given by Brent Carver, Parker Posey, Sarah Polley and Olympia Dukakis, we watch our society's struggle to come to terms with these concepts.

The goal of any creative artist is to tell the truth, to get to the essential core of characters and stories. Fitzgerald has done this so convincingly that his films are sometimes believed to be autobiographical, obliging him to state publicly that he is not HIV positive, neither dying nor suicidal. (And he is too young to have been a 1950's muscle model!)

Even those of us who were already convinced of his talent were unprepared for the dazzling achievement of *3 Needles*. I spoke with Fitzgerald, who admitted that he himself was surprised at the film's reception. "I used to do performance art and Off-Off Broadway theatre, so I'm happy whenever the audience is bigger than the cast. This film appears to have found a big audience abroad and that makes sense given its global nature."

The sheer scope of the undertaking is astonishing: three narrative lines on three continents, any one of which would have made a compelling film on its own. Lucy Liu plays an Asian blood collector who unwittingly spreads disease. Olympia Dukakis, Sandra Oh and Chloe Sevigny are missionary nuns attached to a medical clinic in Africa, torn between the needs of the soul and the physical care required by their patients. A waitress in Montréal, played with raw simplicity by Stockard Channing, cares for a dying husband then discovers her son is a porn actor who has cheated on his blood tests. Fitzgerald says, "Stockard referred to *3 Needles* as a mosaic and this is what it is—little pieces that may tell a tiny story but add up to a complete picture if you step back to view the whole."

The casting was a key element. "I gravitate toward actors from whom I can learn... about storytelling, about life. I've still got a long road ahead of me as a filmmaker. On *3 Needles* I really cared for the stars. Maybe it was the intensity of the journey, or how tough the roles were. Everybody was vulnerable, including me."

Greed, commerce, religion, ignorance and sex all do battle here but Fitzgerald eschews the easy moral lesson, no villains or heroes, no right and wrong choices—just consequences. Fitzgerald, a bold, uncompromising director, shows both respect for his material—he wrote it!—and for his audience. "I think in terms of visual art more than cinema," says Fitzgerald. "If you look at a painting, it's so engaging because a good painting invites you to create part of its story in your mind. I want my films to invite people to create their own stories, not simply tell them one."

For *3 Needles*, Fitzgerald studied many seventeenth century paintings, wanting that strong chiaroscuro effect. "I saw a very different light from the sun in each country." One luminous scene shows Chloe Sevigny moving slowly, reverently through open grasslands towards a herd of giraffes. "We never expected giraffes," says Fitzgerald. "They usually run from people. But I realized that to them, Chloe wrapped all in white didn't really look human. So, instead of running, the giraffe came closer to get a look at her."

Thom Fitzgerald, Chandling & Ashmore

Even in the midst of disease and devastation, the world retains so much of joy and grace. Fitzgerald reveals, "As much as I researched the cultures in which we were shooting, I was constantly surprised. In Africa, if the script read, "The villagers wave good-bye", I would discover that the villagers actually have a fabulous song and dance routine to say good-bye. We wave; they sing and dance."

Fitzgerald takes the huge issue of the AIDS pandemic and makes it human and individual. "Mabel Adams who plays the African grandmother—her daughter really had died from AIDS so Mabel was re-enacting a scene or two from her own life experience. *3 Needles* was an exploration, a long journey." A sombre story, yet *3 Needles* brims with humour, compassion and love.

This film was an important project for Fitzgerald personally and for his career. "When I was shooting the movie I felt it was a creative breakthrough...in obvious ways, like it was my first feature on 35mm. Then I saw the list of network TV shows scheduled to promote the film's opening and it amazed me. So it's a breakthrough in that way too."

3 Needles shows that for better and for worse, the world is an increasingly small place. There is no "they", there is only "we" and all life is interconnected.▼

Ralph Higgins is a writer, columnist and book/movie reviewer living in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia.

Patricia Nell Warren

Outlooks Correction Notice:

In last month's November issue (page 10) the picture of Patricia Nell Warren had the incorrect name Ruth Sims beneath it. Here is the corrected version. Outlooks apologises for any confusion resulting from this.

out & about

EDMONTON

Co-hosts Kristy Hogarth (Left) & Suzanne Patrick

Loud and Queer Cabaret —at Theatre Network

Trevor & Beth

Cathy Derkach

Company members Atri Ranger (Left) & Andrea House

Vanity Fair (Left) & Binki

Lawrence of Arabia

Company members Andrea House (Left) & Nathan Cuckow

Lulu LaRude Benefit—at Buddy's

DJ Toonflash

Planning an event in Edmonton? Contact jackson@jacksonphotografix.com and he'll see about covering it in Out & About
Photos by: jacksonphotografix.com

Nathan (Left) & Trevor

Steven (Left) & Darrell

Darrin (Left) & Darky

10 Days on Earth—at Theatre Network

Ronnie Burkett and his Theatre of Marionettes

Stain of the Berry

Anthony Bidulka
Insomniac Press, 2006

By Dale Smith

Russell Quant is back for his fourth adventure and this time he really has his hands full. In *Stain of the Berry,* author Anthony Bidulka takes us back to Saskatoon, with stops along the way in Vancouver and an island in the Canadian Arctic, making this a novel that didn't have any foreign adventures, in stark contrast to the previous one in the series.

The case starts in a slightly awkward manner, after a mysterious late-night phone call, winds up with a young woman's suicide and Russell is hired by the victim's family to investigate further. Being the slow summer season, Russell eagerly takes the case and tries to connect the reasons why that woman tried to call him the night she died. Scratching the surface of that investigation reveals that there was more than one death, and a pattern of others experiencing harassment by someone they can only describe as the Boogeyman begins to emerge. As the case file grows and starts to cover bigger territory, one wonders if maybe Russell hasn't gotten in over his head this time.

While he takes on this new case, pieces of Russell's past start surfacing at what seems like an inconvenient time. Russell is still reeling from the disappearance of his friend and neighbour, Sereena, after his last outing and the clues to the mystery of her whereabouts start cropping up, connecting Russell to his own past in a shocking way. These pieces also bring Russell into a much larger world than the one he normally finds in Saskatoon—his forays abroad aside—and it adds a greater sense of gravitas to just what is going on in Russell's world.

With this fourth book, Bidulka really comes into his own as a writer—the stakes are higher, the sense of menace much more realised throughout and the deepening of the mythology of the series makes everything come that much more to life. Bidulka's use of language also continues to grow, so many of his visual descriptions are more fully realized. The image of the titular stain of the berry is one that Bidulka is particularly adept at employing, which sent a chill down my spine in its final use. The tendency to the culinary sub-currents of the series are still there, though perhaps not as pronounced in this particular go-around, but one can see that this is still the work of a man who appreciates the finer things in life.

One of the most significant ways in which this tale leapt above those previous is the way that Russell himself starts becoming a little more three-dimensional–as opposed to just another gumshoe. With his thirty-fifth birthday approaching, Russell starts worrying more about his age and prospects, and for the first time, he also becomes a much more sexualised character and not another "safe" celibate gay man then he had a tendency to be in the past. We actually see Russell playing the field a bit more, feeling the stirrings of desire for something more concrete—and Bidulka gives us plenty to appreciate in this regard.

For long-time fans of the series, Bidulka also sprinkles throughout appearances by past characters who've appeared before, keeping the sub-plots of the people who surround Russell alive and kicking. Those secondary characters help to drive the story right to its end, where Bidulka leaves us wanting more to see how these threads resolve themselves.

Stain of the Berry was a thoroughly enjoyable, fast-paced read that I quite hungrily devoured in just a couple of sittings. While I wouldn't say that the red herrings were laid out as generously as in previous works, the various sub-plots more than made up for them, and with an adversary as tricky as the Boogeyman to find, there is more than enough thought-provoking intrigue to go around. Bidulka's growth as a writer continues to amaze me, and I eagerly await the release of the next volume in the series in order to find out what happens next. ▼

Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work also regularly appears in Capital Xtra and Ottawa Xpress, and he has previously written for XY Magazine.

WEDDINGS

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"I, you, he, she, we...in the garden of mystic lovers - are not true distinctions."
- Rumi

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BRYAN STUART

Bryan Stuart has been a creative person all his life, wanting to be an inventor when he grew up and as a child was constantly taking apart boxes, toys, and much more to build stuff from the materials. At a young age he enjoyed drawing pictures of his favorite cartoon characters, specifically the Ninja Turtles and The Ghostbusters. He atended elementary school in Okotoks and junior high and high school in Calgary, ironically failing at Art 10 with a 40% final grade.

1 HAMELT POSTER
2 ZEN STILL LIFE
3 ARCHITECTURE
4 POPPY PAINTING
4 MELANCHOLIC MONK
5 MONKEY PURSUIT

To view Bryan's work visit cosmicarrot.com

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Each month we feature a GLBT photographer or artists' work to showcase Canadian artistic talent. If you would like to be included please send samples of your work to main@outlooks.ca

SINGLE &FAB

By Dale Smith

Like that all-important punctuation mark on that iconic episode of *Sex and the City*, Steven Bereznai's book *Gay and Single…Forever?* also relies on the context provided by that question mark. But if you're someone like Bereznai, a gay "with equity" meaning a good job, an education and real estate—and who has never had a boyfriend, you start to wonder if that is destined to be your lot in life.

Bereznai worked for the CBC for over ten years. Currently, he's the editor of Toronto's fab magazine. The book itself started as an article for the magazine under his predecessor, for the Valentines issue in 2004.

"He knew that I'd never had a boyfriend and he had this lovely idea for a valentine's issue about 'Gay and Single Forever', and he immediately thought of me," Bereznai says. "So I immediately said 'Yes,' because I really wanted to do this story. I really wanted to use it as a way of figuring out my own singleness in a way. The more I got into the piece, I realized the great challenge was to remember that it was about singlehood and not about getting into a relationship. It was kind of hard to wrap my mind around that. What worked was that I kept asking myself 'What if I'm never going to have a boyfriend, what if I'm going to be gay and single forever, what if this is my life?'"

The article was well received. One or two of the people he had interviewed for it knew a publisher, to whom they recommended the piece. It was the publisher who approached Bereznai and asked if he was interested in turning it into a book. From there, the process of taking that one idea and expanding it took over, starting with a lot more research on the history of both the single life for gay men, and the push for domesticity in western society in general.

"I went back to the article as my starting point, and broke it into sections and thought about how to flesh it out," Bereznai explains. "That was phase one, if you will. I also did 'fishing', and I cast a wide net to see what I'd pull in and pick through what I'd pull in. Specifically, one thing I did was to sit down and flip through a few decades' worth of *The Advocate* and *Christopher Street*. I would literally just take out issue after issue and flip through them and see what I came across, looking for patterns. The previous draft read much more like a paper and sounded too researched, so my publisher encouraged me to put more personal stories in there, to think about what this means for today rather than all of the historic stuff, so I ended up losing a lot of the historical stuff and just kept the parts that were most relevant to today."

But history was only one thing that piqued Bereznai's curiosity during the writing process. "One of the things I was very interested in was things having to do with biology, because we have this idea about romance that is all about this spiritual connection," Bereznai says. "I do believe in an element of that, but I think we often forget that a lot of it has to do with our biology—being in the company of someone we feel safe with is very comforting, and our body pumps out chemicals that makes us feel good. I really wanted to put that on the table because it makes it a little less of this Romeo & Juliet idea that a lot of us have."

Indeed one of the most memorable lines from the book was one that likened people in love to drug addicts. "I think any of us that have had a really intense crush have experienced what that feels like," Bereznai says. "I know from personal experience those moments where I really do feel like a crazy person, and that's exactly what's going on—it's that crazy rush of chemicals—and I am a little bit crazy in those moments."

Bereznai went one step further, and really made the book personal with a number of anecdotes that didn't hold anything back. "I didn't want this book to read as if it was all theoretical," Bereznai says. "I've read books like that, where I've said 'this sounds really nice in theory, but it's complicated'. Emotions are complicated, desire is complicated, and loneliness is complicated and I wanted others to see my struggles with that—and I still have struggles with some of those things. The book has helped me worked through them, and it's helped me come up with a process to deal with certain emotions when they come up and allowing them to play their course, but desire and love and intimacy can be messy things, and I wanted that messiness in the book."

Throughout the book, Bereznai is unafraid to address some of the larger concerns about the way that single people—especially single gay men—are looked down upon. "There's still that social pressure that there is a certain way of living your life," Bereznai says. "That is to get into a relationship and get married. When you don't do that, there is a certain stigma that goes with that—the assumption that there's something wrong with you, that you aren't as emotionally developed as people who are in couples, that you've got baggage, that you have issues."

And despite the fact that he believes that there are those people in relationships that are hiding from themselves, Bereznai asserts that there are many ways to achieve emotional maturity—that people are living their lives in myriad ways not just in one simple way.

Believing that there is only one model to follow can actually be damaging. Part of that is the way that we are told that one can only ever have intimacy in a long-term relationship—something Bereznai now rejects. "Intimacy is really about trust, and the theory is that we can only trust someone if we've known them for a while," he says. "I understand that theory and I know it can be true, but I've taken certain emotional risks and I think that if we're nicer to each other in those casual sex situations, then we can be more trusting of one another." He adds that creating intimacy even in casual situations has made for nice changes in his life.

Which brings us back to the question mark. Is it like Carrie Bradshaw's "Single and Fabulous" question mark, or exclamation point? "My publisher worried about not having the question mark, because it seemed too final for him," Bereznai says. "Especially while I was writing this book, the question mark was a bit of a safety blanket for me, but I have to say that by the time I finished writing it, I didn't really feel the need for it myself. It's still possible that I'll wind up in a boyfriend-style relationship. Regardless, I think the question mark there is more of an acknowledgement that you never quite know. People might think that they have permanence because they've got a wedding band, but people get divorced, people die—you just don't know."

"Basically, I think is just a little bit more honest about that, and I think that's something that gay culture has often been—when it comes to relationships—a lot more honest than straight culture, so I'd like to think that we're following in an honourable gay tradition."

Exclamation point indeed. ▼

"I also did some fishing, and I cast a wide net to see what I'd pull in and pick through what I'd pull in."

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Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work also regularly appears in Capital Xtra and Ottawa Xpress, and he has previously written for XY Magazine.

Friday, January 12th - Sunday, January 14th, 2007
Winnipeg, Manitoba

CSAUC CUQSC 2007

CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES QUEER SERVICES CONFERENCE

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From Friday, January 13 to Sunday, January 15, 2006 the University of Ottawa Pride Centre Organized the first-ever Canadian Universities Queer Services Conference (CUQSC) at the University of Ottawa. The purpose of the conference was to not only recognize and understand the challenges that every university queer service faces, but also to develop solutions through the unique experiences that each in attendance would bring with them. Through workshops, group brainstorming sessions, and roundtable discussions, the conference tackled such issues as funding, marketing, campus presence, trans identity, sexual assault and much more.

This weekend-long conference presented a tremendous opportunity for over 70 university queer service providers from around Canada, as well as visitors from organizations such as Vancouver Pride, to network, learn from each other's experiences, share ideas and benefit from the material provided in the seminars, inevitably raising the level of quality of service provision at all the campuses represented.

The introduction of this conference into the queer campus service provision community was favorably received and feedback from all the delegates in attendance has been positive.

CSAUC CUQSC

For more information, contact Jason van Rooy, Conference Coordinator
cuqsc@umsu.ca (204) 474 7439 or 1-800-432-1960 ext: 7439#

This message brought to you by OUTLOOKS

The Greenroom with Charlie David

Sam Irvin grew up with movies as his playground. His grandfather, Warren Irvin, and his father, Sam Irvin, Sr., ran competing movie theater chains in North and South Carolina, where young Sam spent much of his childhood. He made numerous 8mm movies including one starring his younger brother, Tim, as Dracula wearing a black beach towel for a cape (and lots of ketchup).

Sam now lives in Los Angeles where he directs motion pictures, television movies and episodic TV. He has also served in various producing capacities on such films as Bill Condon's Oscar-winning masterpiece, *Gods and Monsters*, for which Irvin also co-directed the "Making of..." extra for the DVD release.

Outlooks: According to the Internet Movie Data Base, your career in film started around 1980 as the assistant to legendary director Brian De Palma on the award winning film *Dressed to Kill*. Did Mr. De Palma have any advice for you as you started to make your way in Hollywood?

Irvin: I absorbed an enormous amount about the art of filmmaking while working with Brian. In those pre-computer days, Brian would storyboard his films by drawing stick-figure images on blank business cards and tack them up on the wall—hundreds of them, dissecting each scene in the script. I adapted my own way of accomplishing the same thing by writing out extensive shot lists, which I still use to this day as a checklist on the set. He was very supportive of my dream to be a director and when I made a short film on credit cards, he let me use his editing room for free.

Outlooks: You've been a producer on a number of landmark gay films including award winners including *The Broken Hearts Club* and *Gods and Monsters*. First, I have to get this out of the way: did you ever get the urge to ask Dean Cain to put on his Superman outfit?

Irvin: I didn't have to ask. He'd greet me at the door wearing the suit every night when I got home from work. Seriously, Dean is one of the most genuinely nice actors I've worked with in the biz. He was extremely comfortable playing a gay character because he seemed so comfortable about himself as a straight man—with absolutely nothing to prove. No embarrassment, no macho hang-ups. To him, it was a great part and an opportunity to stretch. And, man, it sure was easy to be infatuated with him. Everybody on the set was! He's just a true sweetheart.

Outlooks: At what point did you make the transition from producer to director?

Irvin: Well, I never really wanted to produce. I'd always wanted to direct, which I began doing when I was a kid with 8mm home movies. I directed my first professional short film in 1985; it got into Sundance and opened theatrically in New York and L.A. This led—rather slowly—to my first feature film as a director, *Guilty as Charged* in 1991, starring Rod Steiger, Heather Graham, Isaac Hayes and Lauren Hutton. Since then, I've tried to focus on directing but the occasional job will come up for me to work as a producer—but my heart is not in the business side of things. In the case of *Gods and Monsters*, I ended up co-directing the "Making of..." featurette for the DVD, so I got to use some of my creative juices on that.

Outlooks: Was it a smooth transition?

Irvin: If anything, the transition was the other way around. I did have a couple of producing jobs before my directing career got going, but those don't really count. Once I had directed several movies, I then got asked to line produce several films. It was very hard to turn off my artistic instincts in order to let the director make his movie. In a case like Bill Condon on *Gods and Monsters*, or Greg Berlanti on *The Broken Hearts Club*, it was a pleasure to observe them in action because they knew what they were doing. Where it got painful was when a director did not know what he was doing—and it was my job to keep things on schedule and on budget. I won't name any names, but I hated those situations and, because of it, I try to steer away from producing now.

Outlooks: *Frankenstein* director James Whale was a big influence on you. How did you feel when *Gods and Monsters* won the Oscar, then went on to win a myriad of accolades and honors worldwide?

Irvin: James Whale's *The Bride of Frankenstein* is my all-time favorite movie. Aside from being a brilliant, dark comedy and horror film rolled into one, it is also one of the gayest films ever made. As I kid, I must have subconsciously picked up on the gay subtext. Working on *Gods and Monsters*, in which Ian McKellen played James Whale, was a tremendous highlight of my career and, of course, I was thrilled when Bill Condon won an Oscar for Best Screenplay. But Ian McKellen deserved to win Best Actor (he won the Independent Spirit Award) and Lynn Redgrave deserved to win Best Supporting Actress (she won the Golden Globe). I know I should be humble and grateful for the fact that one Oscar was pretty damn amazing, but the movie was so good, it just deserved more.

Outlooks: Vancouver has become somewhat of a second home for you as you've directed projects here for Insight Films, Shavick Entertainment and Regent Entertainment. What are your experiences with the Canadian talent pool of actors and crew?

Irvin: I adore working in Vancouver! I directed *Too Cool for Christmas* and *Deadly Skies* there. The talent pool in front and behind the camera is as good as it gets and I hope to return sooner rather than later! I miss all my friends there!

Outlooks: You happened to work with my hero, Antonio Sabato Jr. on *Deadly Skies*, which was shot in two formats simultaneously. A gay version, in which Antonio has a boyfriend, played by Vancouver actor Michael Boisvert, and a straight version in which Antonio's love interest is Rae Dawn Chong. What were the challenges in shooting the two versions?

Irvin: It sounds nutty, but it was actually very fun and surprisingly easy. The story was sort of Armageddon meets Mission: Impossible, so the romantic subplots did not take up much screen time anyway. When we had a scene that involved romance, we'd shoot it two ways and that was that. No biggie.

Outlooks: Let's talk about your current projects. *Dante's Cove* is a supernatural soap opera for here! TV. What were the challenges of moving from features to television?

Irvin: In terms of the look and feel, I approach movies and TV shows the same way. With *Dante's Cove's* continuing storyline, however, things unfold at a different pace. Unlike a movie where all the loose ends get neatly sewn up by the end, *Dante's Cove* has lots of seeds planted for later—lots of unanswered questions. Also, when I direct a film, we have a 100-page script and everybody has an easy time keeping track of where we are when we are shooting out of order. For *Dante's Cove*: SEASON 2, however, we were simultaneously shooting all five one-hour episodes, so the mountain of material really kept us on our toes.

Outlooks: Season One of *Dante's Cove* was shot on 35mm film and the second is on HD (High Definition). Did you find shooting HD changed your style? Did you experiment more or allow for additional takes?

Irvin: The never-ending argument. Of course, we all love the look of 35mm. But, it is ridiculously expensive and time consuming. On a short schedule and tight budget, there is nothing that beats HD—which I believe looks fantastic, too. I do not feel compromised at all by using it. Plus, I shoot with two cameras and because tape is cheap, I can run extra takes without breaking the bank. Film, of course, runs a maximum of ten minutes per mag. With HD, you get something like forty minutes. So, there is less stopping to reload, which the actors love—and it helps the schedule. I'm spoiled now. It would be hard to go back to 35mm knowing what I'll have to sacrifice in order to use it.

Outlooks: The first season has been a big seller in the DVD market, do you think *Dante's Cove* is gaining a cult following?

Irvin: From your lips to Godzilla! I certainly hope so!

Outlooks: Besides your projects as a producer and director, you're also a writer; what are you working on right now?

Irvin: Between directing gigs, I am writing a book on the life of Kay Thompson, the author of *Eloise* and the star of *Funny Face*. It keeps me sane.

For more information visit: **dantescove.com & heretv.com** ▼

Charlie David is an actor and co-host of Bump! on OUTtv.

Christmas DOs and DON'Ts

By Jason Krell

For many people this is the time of year that brings out the best in them—they trim their trees, wrap their gifts lovingly and go on sleigh rides with their loved ones. Then there are the rest of us who are finishing our work and final exams, fighting crowds at the mall and are reduced to stealing parking spots from old ladies.

There are ways to keep that Christmas chip off your shoulder, however, and by following a few simple rules you too may feel the Christmas spirit, or at least keep from cutting yourself for sport.

Please note, the term 'Christmas' will appear occasionally throughout this article. I mean no disrespect to those who celebrate Hanukkah, Kwanza, Las Posadas or any other holidays–all wonderful celebrations. Those holidays are simply outside of my white trash frame of reference. Following this same logic, I won't offer any suggestions on how to make your money grow or the joys of having a ten-incher.

DO go to your office party, have a few drinks and let loose with your co-workers. DON'T get loser-pissed. You don't want the Monday morning water cooler talk to be about you throwing up after the first course or sleeping with the coat check boy. Open bars aren't a personal challenge and can lead to months of humiliation by the ones that have nothing better to talk about but your yuletide antics.

You especially need to heed the over-drinking. DON'T if you're attending your partner's staff party. Chew with your mouth closed, have a reasonable amount to drink and keep an eye on your date to ensure they won't lose their job as a result of their behaviour. Then, at the end of the night take full advantage of them.

DON'T look too bored when you're forced to talk about how other partygoers' kids are doing in school or how they're excelling in hockey camp. Smile and nod politely, then change the subject subtly. Example, "Emily is growing up so fast, she's talking about becoming a veterinarian!" Your response: "How wonderful; have you heard about kids going to rainbow parties?"

DO buy yourself a new holiday outfit. You should have something that you haven't been seen in a thousand times already. DON'T let a salesperson tell you that a shiny shirt or a fedora qualifies as formal wear. The holidays are not the time to make a blinding fashion statement. All that a silver tuxedo shirt will say about you is that you're a banger.

DO buy as many gifts online as you can. Shopping from home saves you the stress of parking, carrying your coat around the mall and waiting in line. Embrace modern technology and browse the specialty gifts that made Oprah's favourite things. Plus, if you get bored, you can always cruise by your favourite porn site for a 'break' in the privacy of your home. You can't (or shouldn't) do that at the Bay.

DON'T shop in big box stores after December 1st. No matter how many things you can get in one store, ask yourself: will it be worth the trauma of playing shopping cart bumper cars or waiting in a line up similar to one at Disneyland? Get your wrapping paper, cards and Pot of Gold at your local drug store instead. It'll be worth paying the extra fifty cents to go home without a headache.

DO handwrite cards for your loved ones. Even if your handwriting is comparable to that of a serial killer's, it's something people appreciate. You don't need to include a cheesy portrait of yourself or a "What we've been up to in 2006" letter, but personalize it. E-cards and text messages don't cut it (the jury is still out on Christmas party e-vites).

DO begin the tradition of an annual Christmas lunch with your best friends. My friends and I do this every year before we take off to wherever we're going. This is a good time to let them know how much you care, even if you've been annoying and whiney for the last few weeks, like I can be.

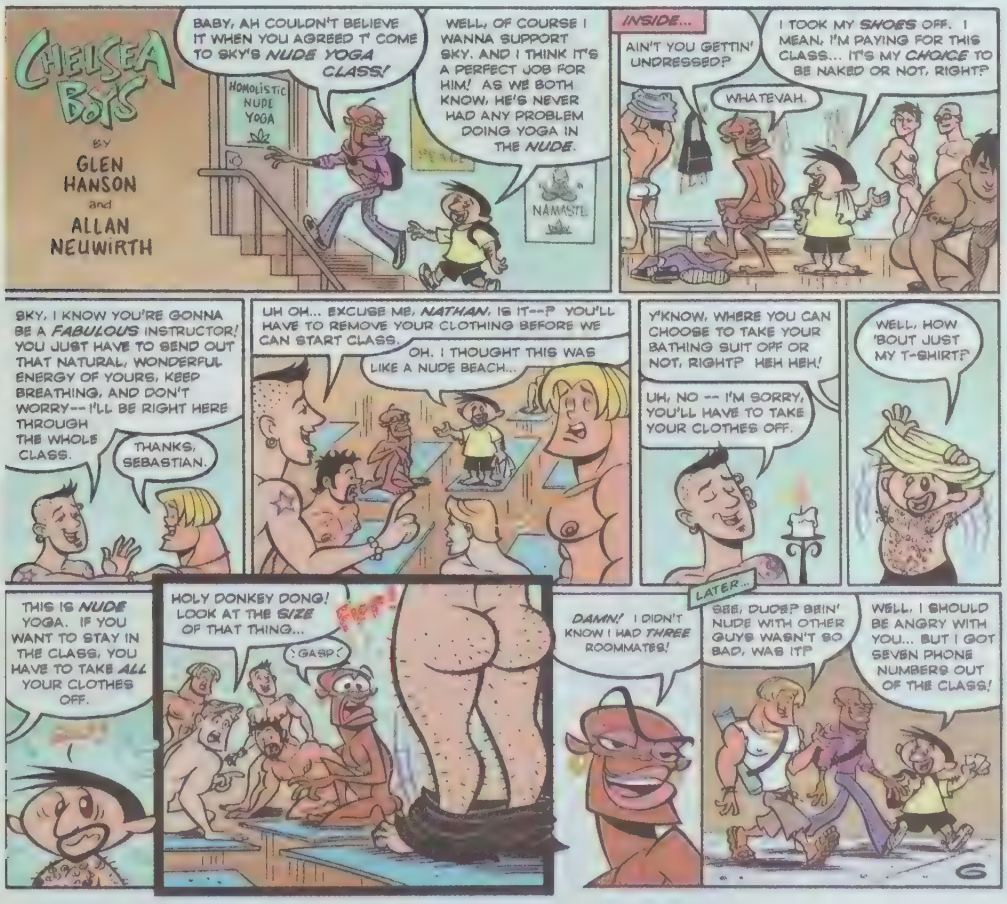
DON'T spend different amounts of money on your friends. You can't buy one person a five-dollar coffee card and another an iPod. Your friends will talk and jealousy will result. Even if you think spending a few extra bucks will get you in their pants, it's not worth it.

DON'T go out to a gay bar on December 24 or 25. Even if you're spending the holidays alone, cruising at Christmas time is pathetic. You're guaranteed one thing: a long talk with someone even sadder than you are.

DO enjoy all the yummy squares, mini pepperonis, cheese and eggnog you want. Christmas is the time of year when it's perfectly acceptable to gain a few pounds around the middle. Besides, January is prime time for checking out the other fatties at the gym.

Finally, DON'T drink and drive (this is where I get serious on your asses). Drinking and driving is not only dangerous, but it's tacky. There are plenty of great services available to get you home safely. And if you really can't find a ride, crash at a friend's place. There's no shame in waking up with a couch pattern stamped on your cheek and a wine bottle up your arse; there is shame in bumming rides from your friends throughout 2007. ▼

Jason Krell is a small town boy trying to make it in the big city. Outlooks' former graphic designer, Jason is now studying communications at Mount Royak College.



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Yuletide Giving

By Jesse Trautmann

Three days before Christmas and there was a thundering knock on my apartment door. When I opened it, I was surprised to see my friend Steve push by me, asking if I had any wine. I didn't expect to see him because he was supposed to be on a date. I popped the cork on a nine dollar bottle of red and Steve told me he cancelled the date because he didn't have any money.

"When's that ever stopped you?" I asked.

"I know, but I just had a feeling that this guy wasn't going to pay for the meal. I couldn't risk the cheque coming and having to confess I'm broke and ask him to pay. That's humiliating," Steve explained.

"When's that ever stopped you?" I asked again. "Why are you dating if you have no money?"

"Because it's Christmas and I'm lonely," Steve said topping off his wine.

"Shouldn't you be spending time with your family or something?" I asked.

"That's easy for you to say, you've got a man, a rich one who's taking you shopping tomorrow. You've secured a sugar daddy to deck your balls with lots of holly." Steve snapped at me.

"You're exaggerating," I said, "He bought me one pair of Armani underwear. It's not like that. He knows I'm a student and I can't afford expensive gifts. We're just going to the Eaton's Centre to crowd surf a few stores, and he'll tell me something he wants and vice versa. It will be simple."

Steve laughed at me. "Sure it will be simple. When he accepts your gift not saying a word that it's one tenth the price of what he bought you. Are you prepared to make up that difference with free gestures and cute surprises? You'll be working off the guilt by doing dishes and getting up early to make him breakfast in bed. I'll tell you this because I'm your friend: you don't have enough money to date this guy without becoming his servant."

"And you don't even have enough money to go Dutch at McDonalds," I said ushering Steve out the door. "Go see your family and I'll call you on Christmas."

The next day, Flash—the man I was dating—and I weaved our way through the hoards of shoppers in the mall and I bought him the new Swiss Army wallet he wanted. After ten more minutes he said he couldn't handle the crowds anymore and suggested we leave and get lunch away from the mall. Outside it was a blizzard so we hopped into a cab and before I knew it we were in ritzy-ditzy Yorkville. The blizzard dissipated, making it much more comfortable to shop but for me there was still an awkward chill in the air. We entered a shop and while I was still browsing, he already had selected ten items and headed to the change room.

He returned to me from behind and saw the clothes I was considering. He ordered the store clerk to come over and get them for me in sizes medium and small and to find a fitting room for me. The young guy quickly came over, took the clothes and gave me a wink as if he knew what I was up to.

In the fitting room, I dropped a shirt trying to get it off the hanger and the price card fell out. It was $345 for a dress shirt! I panicked as pictures of endless nights of dishes and servitude blazed in front of my eyes. I stood up on the bench behind me and looked over into the next stall and saw Flash with no pants on.

"I can't do this." I whispered loudly and threw the shirt at him.

"What the hell are you doing?" he said startled, "Just try the clothes on, I bet you'll fall in love with them."

"Are you kidding? That dress shirt is almost as much as my rent! I can't let you buy this for me."

"What is your problem?" Flash asked.

"You are…and all of this. You're my boyfriend not my sugar daddy," I blurted out.

I suddenly realized that I didn't want to be there. I didn't want to be sucked into this lifestyle, well at least not until I could afford it on my own.

"This is over," I blurted out as I made a swift getaway—without being pursued by Flash in his half-naked state. It would be the last time he ever saw me. I know it's harsh to dump a guy two days before Christmas, but I was actually doing him a favour. In the long run he'd save a lot of money.

On Christmas morning I woke up early and headed to the train station to travel to my parents. On the way, I bumped into Jamie and Shawn, a couple I knew, coming out of a coffee shop. They lived around the corner sharing a small bachelor apartment together and although they didn't have much, they were always refreshingly cheerful. We said 'hello' and I asked what they had bought for each other.

"Nothing," Jamie replied "we don't buy each other gifts at Christmas but we do put a little bit away for our trip to Mexico that we're saving for."

"We hate the stress of it all," Shawn added, "worrying about how much to spend or how much you are expected to spend, not to mention the anxiety of disappointing him." Shawn stopped himself, "You probably think we're crazy."

"No, not at all. I like that, I get that."

As we parted, a light snowfall calmly drifted down from above. As I walked away I couldn't help but look back at them, walking hand in hand, towards their little hole in the wall, void of presents. Jamie and Shawn taught me something that morning about people who have been dating in our capitalist, consumer-driven city. We forget that two people with nothing can give each other everything. ▼

Jesse Trautmann is a twenty-six-year-old freelance writer in Toronto and a Journalism student at Ryerson. He welcomes feedback from readers. Contact him at jessetra@hotmail.com

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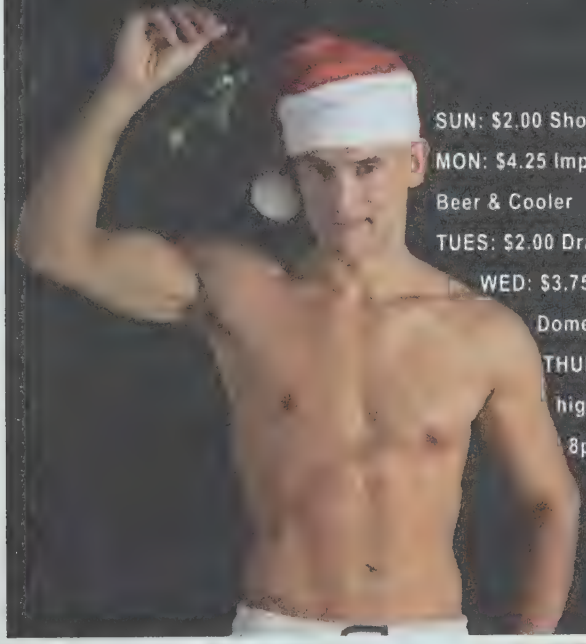

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OUTLOOKS' FEATURE INN

Chambers Hotel

Chambers, the luxury art hotel, offers sixty guest rooms on five floors of two landmark revival buildings in one of Minneapolis' most alluring neighbourhoods. This is the first hotel to offer a combined art, culinary, design and true boutique hotel experience under one roof. The Chambers is both hotel and home.

Sister hotel to New York's famed Chambers Hotel the Chambers Minneapolis bespeaks creativity. At the Chambers every staff member is a guest's personal concierge and the front desk staff are regarded as private secretaries to the guests—an impeccable level of service which only a small hotel can provide.

The Chambers' sixty spacious rooms and suites all have the selective qualities of high ceilings, large windows which open and abundant natural light. Renowned designer David Rockwell created soothing modernistic interiors emphasizing comfort, harmonized proportions, a monochromatic colour scheme with the colour and energy added by original pieces of contemporary artwork.

All rooms include pillow-top mattresses and feather beds, large flat screen televisions, spacious closets, large work spaces and complimentary wireless internet.

As the country's first luxury art hotel, the Chambers features over two-hundred pieces of original contemporary art work from the private collection of the hotel's owner Ralph Burnet.

The Kitchen, located on two levels of the hotel, ia an open, inviting and informal one-hundred and ninety seat restaurant with world renowned chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten at the helm. Here you will find the service and cuisine of a fine dining establishment without the attitude.

Whatever your reason for visiting Minneapolis the Chambers is ready and waiting to make your stay perfect in every way. **Chambersminneapolis.com** 612-767-6900

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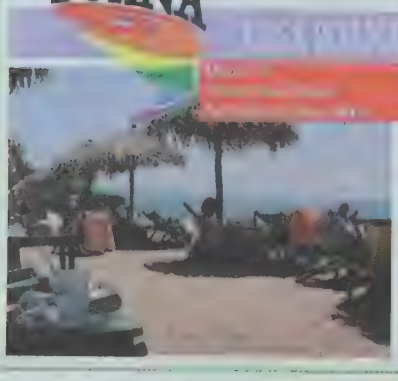

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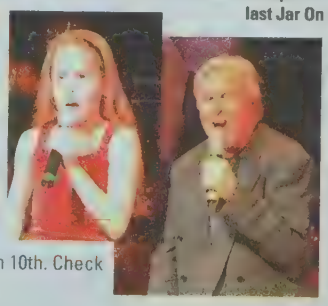
Upcoming fundraising Events

Recent fundraising results

Prairie Fairie Fowl Dinner raises over $34,000

The Fillmore Family Foundation is thrilled that over $34,000 was raised at the 7th Annual Prairie Fairies Fowl supper on November 11, 2006 to support the work of A Loving Spoonful, Dr. Peter Centre and McLaren Housing Society. Please visit www.fillmorefamily.ca for more information and to watch for details on next year's event. New surprises are in store for the long-standing prairie hoe-down! Just remember that this event sells out in days, so be sure to check the site next summer. Join Linda and Doreen for an unforgettable evening.

Starry Night raises over $30,000!



The Shooting Stars Foundation put on another stellar evening of entertainment hosting its 21st Vancity's Starry Night this past Nov. 20. Local talent big and small perform with all their gusto at this highly regarded event. From the famous Jim Byrnes to the future star Michaela Slinger, the talent runs far and deep at this event. Funds raised by this and other Shooting Stars events benefit 11 local AIDS/HIV agencies. Watch for a new upcoming jazz oriented event called Jazzilla at River Rock Casino on February 1st, 2007, followed by the popular Motown Meltdown at the Commodore Ballroom on March 10th. Check www.shootingstarsfoundation.org for more info.

Rhinestones & Leather raises $500+...

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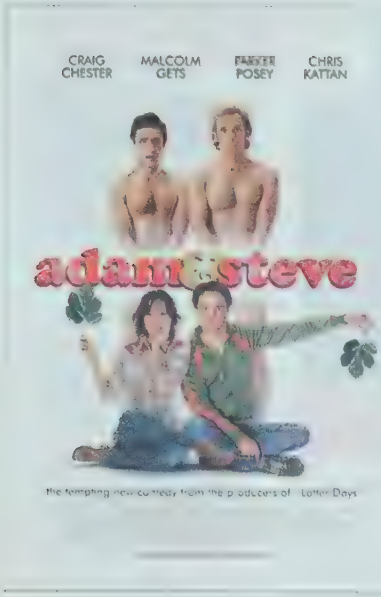

Adam & Steve

Directed by: Craig Chester
From: tla releasing
Running Time: 99 minutes
Release Date: 2005

By Dale Smith

The year is 1987, and the twenty-one year old Goth Adam (Craig Chester) and his morbidly obese best friend Rhonda (Parker Posey) take a trip to Danceteria for the first time. Adam is immediately spellbound by Steve (Malcolm Getz), one of the Dazzle Dancers who perform for the crowd. As the night drags on, the two leave together, but not before Steve gives Adam his first taste of cocaine and they watch the sun come up from the Brooklyn Bridge. But as Adam takes Steve back to his place, disaster strikes as the cocaine has been cut with baby laxatives. Steve has an unfortunate accident in front of Adam and immediately flees into the night.

Fast-forward sixteen years. Adam is now a recovering addict, six months clean and sober. Rhonda has lost all of her excess weight in Overeaters Anonymous and trying to make it as a comedienne who still tells jokes as though she were her old plus size. When Adam accidentally stabs his dog and rushes to an emergency room, he meets duty psychiatrist Steve, who patches up the pooch—neither of them aware that the other person was the one from the fateful night at Danceteria. In the intervening years, Steve has become a control freak whose only relationships are sex in the shower at the gym. A chance encounter later in the week has Adam ask Steve out on a date—and so begins the beautiful relationship.

Right off, surreal moments begin kicking in, as Adam explains a little about the "Bernstein Curse", or in his particular case, the mysterious way that every time he shows affection in public, someone from New Jersey happens to be passing by and throws a beer bottle at him. Adam's parents are beset by all kinds of accidental circumstances, as Steve finds out during Hanukkah dinner. Steve's parents, meanwhile, come from a trailer park in Texas, who thought it a particularly good idea to bring a box of Zinfandel to dinner for Thanksgiving. Adding to the dynamic is Michael (Chris Kattan), Steve's slovenly straight friend who has been living on his couch for the past five years.

Surreal moments and sappy montage sequences are punctuated with more scenes of particularly blissful meetings, until finally Steve decides to propose to Adam. When he takes him to the Brooklyn Bridge to do it, he realises that Adam was the one who witnessed his messy loss of control all those years ago, and he runs screaming into the night, leaving Adam puzzled—and begins a whole new sequence of absurd moments that culminate in a battle dance in a gay two-step class, where Adam mysteriously gains the ability to do complicated choreography when he could barely two-step just a few months previous.

The film was written and directed by its star, Chester, and throughout I had an overwhelming sense of "nice"—as though the dramatic tension left one wanting, mostly because it seemed as though Chester didn't really want to let anything bad happen to the characters until the moment Steve fled into the night. In fact, the one major fight the couple had was deleted. The film's attempt to wrestle with any kind of uniqueness in the relationship was practically absent. At one point, Steve declares that he doesn't want an open relationship like other gay couples, but he also doesn't want to have a "straight" relationship—and yet, that's exactly where the film keeps steering the couple. In fact, it steers it so much in that direction right through that it makes me wonder just what it was that Chester or the characters were trying to find. No middle ground or unique perspective on their relationship is offered in the end, which leaves viewers disappointed on an intellectual level.

Overall, the film is sweet and light and doesn't challenge anyone too much. The flashback scene was great. Posey and Kattan add a dimension to the film that would have been unbearably saccharine if it were left entirely up to the two title characters. Still, it's an entertaining film—perfect if you're looking for some fluffy fare.

Favourite Lines:

Adam: "I think he knows more about this stuff than us. He has a degree. We just have Oprah."

Rhonda: "You know, Oprah has made it impossible for me to have a close relationship with anyone besides Oprah." ▼

Photos Courtesy of TLA Releasing

Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work also regularly appears in Capital Xtra and Ottawa Xpress, and he has previously written for XY Magazine

GLCSA

Happy Holidays

We would like to take this opportunity to extend best wishes to all our members, volunteers and patrons for the very best that this holiday season has to offer.

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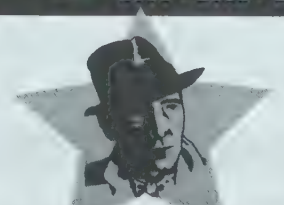

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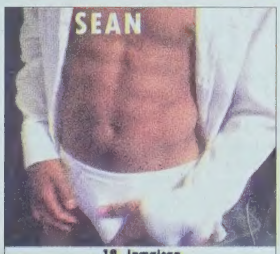

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Inn Over His Head

From: Adonis Pictures

Featuring: Trevor Knight, Andy Kirra, Damon Phoenix, Kyle Aames, Caleb Carter, Park Wiley, Tyler Austin, Lars Svenson

Running Time: 75 minutes

Young, hung and handsome Trevor Knight stars in this movie, portraying the front desk clerk who cannot keep his hands off the guests at a gay inn. Much to the chagrin of the hotel's owner, Trevor is a good front desk employee but he takes the meaning of excellent service and a warm welcome just a little too far. Trevor finds out it's hard to play at work!

This particular weekend the inn is full and Trevor is told to welcome the guests only at registration and not in their bedrooms. Fortunately for some of the guests, super-hung and cute Trevor always finds a way around the rules. Aren't they made to be broken?

As the guests arrive for their weekend, it's easy to understand why Trevor has difficulty holding back that extra-special treatment which he loves to proffer. Andy Kirra shows up with a hot date, but Kevin resists the temptation to make it a threesome. He leaves Andy and his partner alone in their room and they waste no time using the welcoming bed for hot afternoon sex together.

The next person to arrive is Damon Phoenix but without a reservation, there's no room at the inn. As a friend of Trevor's and not a guest at the hotel it's easy for Trevor to take a lunch break and enjoy a "nooner". There's just time for a quickie in the storage room but nobody should ever agree to a quickie with Trevor as there's far too much to enjoy in a short period of time.

The guests come and go, but Trevor is always ready to make their stay at the inn memorable.

With a script for this movie written by Trevor Knight himself, you can see why he enjoys his work so much and customer satisfaction is his pleasure. The only thing that could be longer is the movie itself.

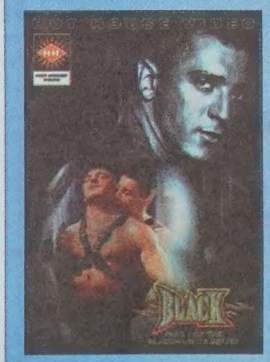
Review sponsored by Express Video
#202 - 11745 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton
(780)482-7480 exec.express@shaw.ca

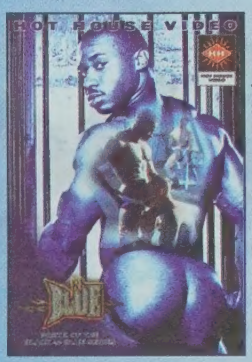
RATING:
(OUT OF FIVE STARS)

MUSIC:	★★★★
BODIES:	★★★★★½
ACTION:	★★★★★
SETS:	★★★★★
STORY:	★★★★★

Black -N- Blue

From: Hot House





Featuring: Alex Collack, Robert van Damme, Nick Piston, Kent North, Francesco D'Macho, Marc Williams, Dean Monroe, Marco Paris, Arpad Miklos, Jason Kingsley, Trevor Knight, Matt Cole, Rafael Alencar, Mason Wyler, Kyle Lewis, Tamas Eszterhazy, Gabriel Sinclair, Ross Stuart, Nick Horn, Anthony Martinez, Mason Garet

Running Time: 180 Minutes

Slip into the colours of leather and Levis with over twenty of the hottest male stars while you're introduced to the new Hot House exclusive Francesco D'Macho. Enjoy the mindset of muscular real men who like it hot, sweaty and rough around the edges. AVN Hall of Fame Director Steven Scarborough invites you to hide in the shadows and become the voyeur of his latest two full-length movies Black-N-Blue.

This amazing cast of hunky men delivers eight scenes including couples, threesomes and orgies loaded with hot action. With cast members including Jason Kingsley, Trevor Knight, Mason Wyler and Rafael Alencar you're guaranteed something big is coming to the small screen. The action is non-stop as one hot scene leads straight into the next one.

The first DVD is full of leather action and the other is all about Levis, jock straps and how well they fit these perfect bodies. In a perfect dungeon setting with all the tools of the trade and appropriate toys, these muscular men show off their unique talents and perfect physiques. Add to all of this sweaty action some excellent camera skills and great lighting and you know that these two movies are heading straight to the top of the award nominees for 2006. The DVD set includes two bonus scenes, XXX photo galleries and more for a total of five hours of viewing pleasure. This is a new release from Hot House, perfect for every shopping list this holiday season.

Review sponsored by

GayHotMovies.com

RATING:
(OUT OF FIVE STARS)

MUSIC:	★★★★★
BODIES:	★★★★★½
ACTION:	★★★★★½
SETS:	★★★★★
STORY:	★

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Good-looking, 43 year old guy. I've got a very fit, lean body, 5'11", 160lb, smooth, 7" cut. I work out regularly. I'm looking for a buddy to hang out with to go to movies, bike riding, dinner, rollerblading, and on hot vacations. I'm tired of going on beach holidays with straight friends. Looking for a laid back guy to hang out with and of course have sex with.

Casual Encounters:
Horny eager bottom in downtown Calgary. I'm always up for new adventures. I would like somebody a little more dominant. I'm smooth, slim, 5'11", 170lb, 6" cut. I love playing around.

Bears & Big Men:
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